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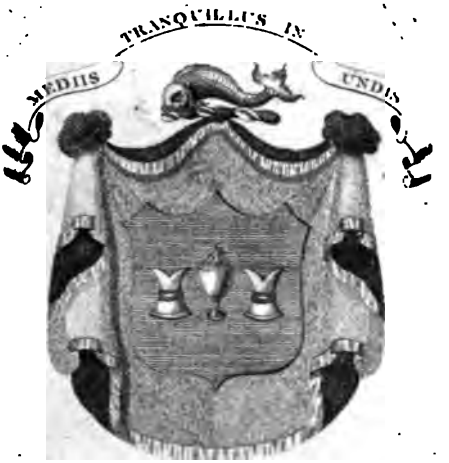

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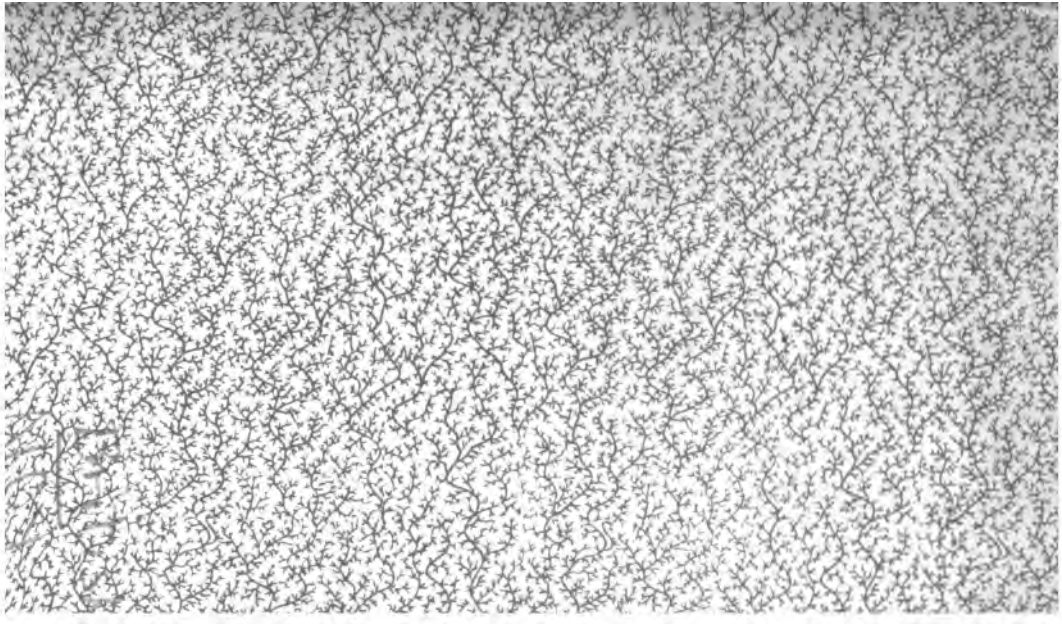

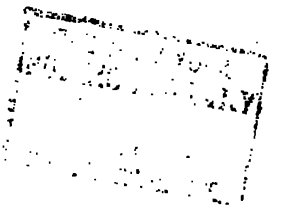

REVd THOMAS WARTON.

Published [illegible] by Longman & Rees Paternoster Row.

THE

BRITISH ESSAYISTS;

WITH

PREFACES,

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL,

BY

ALEXANDER CHALMERS, A.M.

VOL. XXXIII.

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IDLER.

" Duplex libelli dos est, quod risum movet,
" Et quod prudenti vitam consilio monet."

PHÆDRUS.

Χάριτες μίαν ἔτι.

N° 1 — 51.

THE IDLER *having omitted to distinguish the Essays of his Correspondents by any particular signature, thinks it necessary to inform his Readers, that from the ninth, the fifteenth, thirty-third, forty-second, fifty-fourth, sixty-seventh, seventy-sixth, seventy-ninth, eighty-second, ninety-third, ninety-sixth, and ninety-eighth Papers, he claims no other praise than that of having given them to the Public.*

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HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL

PREFACE

TO

THE IDLER.

THE IDLER was originally published by Dr. JOHNSON in a newspaper called "The Universal Chronicle, or Weekly Gazette," projected in the year 1758 by Mr. JOHN NEWBERY, Bookseller, whom Sir JOHN HAWKINS justly characterises as "a man of good understanding, and great integrity." He suggested the plan of many useful compilations for the young, or those who had more curiosity than leisure to read; and generally employed men of considerable abilities in such undertakings. Among the best of them may be mentioned, a collection of voyages, entitled "The World Displayed," to which Dr. JOHNSON wrote an historical introduction; and many now living may perhaps remember the pleasure they derived from Mr. NEWBERY'S excellent little books, for "masters and misses," of some of which he was the reputed author. He died in the year 1776.

Dr. JOHNSON is said to have been allowed a share in the profits of the Universal Chronicle, for which he was to furnish a short essay on such subjects of a general or temporary kind as might suit the taste of newspaper readers, and distinguish this publication from its contemporaries. Sir JOHN HAWKINS assigns as a reason for Mr. NEWBERY'S wishing to have an ESSAY in his paper, that the occurrences during the intervals of its publication were not sufficient to fill its columns. If this was the case, it is a curious particular in the history of political intelligence. Those who now print *weekly* papers find it not only difficult but impossible to contain half of the articles, which have entertained other readers during the intervals of publication, and which, from the common impulses of domestic or public curiosity, their readers think they have a right to expect.

The Universal Chronicle appeared on Saturday, April 15th, 1758, containing the IDLER No. 1, and continued to be published on the same day, weekly, until April 5th, 1760, when the IDLER was concluded, and with it, if I am not mistaken, the Chronicle was dropped for want of encouragement.

These Essays are very short, and were written with little effort, but afford evident marks of the same depth of thought which predominates in the RAMBLER, although committed to writing with more ease and familiarity of style, and more general gaiety of manner. In his characteristic correspondence also, the Author unbends with considerable felicity, as in the

first letter from *Betty Broom** in No. 26, and sometimes catches himself relapsing into his more solemn periods, and immediately descends to common language, as in the beginning of the second letter from that correspondent in No. 29.

As he wrote in a newspaper, by the success of which he expected to profit, he sometimes forgot the exclusive business of the Moral Essayist, meddled with the occasional politics of the day, and no doubt gratified many of his readers, by censuring the conductors of state affairs, with whom he appears to have been out of humour. Nos. 5, 8, and part of 39, are admirable effusions of the splenetic kind. In the supposititious, French account of the capture of Louisburg in No. 20, he has some sentiments on the rights of conquest on Indian territory, which have often been repeated and expanded by those who are disaffected to the English empire in the Eastern world; but still at this time, he had not a very exalted opinion of the importance of newspaper opposition or information, and No. 7 is one instance of the ridicule with which he contemplated the labours of his fellow-journalists.

These political allusions, however, are specks which will be pardoned when we contemplate the general merit of the IDLER. The character he assumed was in some degree, and by his own

* "Mrs. GARDINER was very zealous for the support of the Ladies' Charity School, in the parish of St. Sepulchre. It is confined to females, and, I am told, it afforded a hint for the story of Betty Broom in the IDLER." Boswell's Life of Johnson, Vol. 3. p. 502. Edit. 2d.

confession derived from his personal habits. In representing idleness in various lights, but particularly with a view to the labours of the student, he evidently drew from sources with which he was well acquainted. "He describes the miseries of idleness," says his Biographer, "with the lively sensations of one who has felt them, and in his private memorandums while engaged in it, we find, "this year I hope to learn diligence." The character of *Sober* in No. 31, is evidently his own portrait, and much of the Journal in No. 67, although written by his friend Mr. LANGTON, belongs to him. In his Life we find how frequently he was disturbed from such placid employment as "reading the Scriptures with Grotius."

As papers of equal excellence with those in the RAMBLER, Mr. BOSWELL has selected Nos. 14, 24, 41, 43, 51, 52, 58, 89, and 103, to which a few others may with the same justice be added. But the chief excellence of the IDLER is, in my opinion, the dry and grave humour with which public or private folly is exposed. Of this we have an instance, out of many that might be mentioned, in No. 6, on a lady's wonderful performance on horseback. This was founded on a real incident. A young lady laid a wager, that she should ride a thousand miles in a thousand hours; she was allowed six weeks, but performed the feat within a month, "lying by," as the account states, only two days at Newmarket. "At her coming in, the country people strewed flowers in her way, and made great rejoicings on the occasion*." This news

* London Chronicle, May 6, 1758.

arrived in London May 6th, and JOHNSON instantly seized so fertile a topic of ridicule.

The whimsical characters or oddities in this work are numerous and original, and exhibit our author as excelling in genuine humour, a talent which some, it is impossible to say why, have been inclined to deny him. His right to the full honours of that species of wit, will be decidedly established, if almost any characters drawn by former ESSAYISTS are brought into comparison with *Tom Tempest* and *Jack Sneaker* in No. 10, *Ned Drugget* in No. 16, *Jack Whirler* in No. 19, *Dick Linger* in No. 21, *Mrs. Plenty* in No. 35, the *City Wit* in No. 47, *Will Marvel* in No. 49, *Sophron* in No. 57, *Dick Minim* in Nos. 60 and 61, *Dick Shifter* in No. 71, the Club in No 78 and 83, and the *Good Sort of Woman* in No. 100. These are sketches, indeed, but they are the sketches of a master, with an eye observant of real life and manners, and catching the ridiculous in every situation.

In these little Essays, our author also sometimes animadverted on the publications as well as on the incidents of the times. Petvin's "Letters concerning mind," afforded him an opportunity of ridiculing the *terrific diction*, the intention of which is to frighten and amaze, and its natural effect to drive away the reader. The passage, he quotes, is sufficiently ludicrous without any illustration.

When the sequel to Lord CLARENDON'S History was published, the difficulties through which that work struggled into light, led our author's mind to consider the common fate of posthumous publications. In the course of this,

in No. 65, he adverts to the literary histor[illegible] SWIFT, POPE, PEIRESC, and others, but m[illegible] a remark on HALE's "Pleas of the Crown, which did not pass without animadversion "How HALE would have borne the mutilation which his Pleas of the Crown have suffered from the Editor, they who know his character will easily conceive." As this bore hard upon the character of Mr. EMLYN, to whom Sir JOSEPH JEKYLL, Master of the Rolls, committed the care, as Editor, of the "History of the Pleas of the Crown," an anonymous correspondent in the Gentleman's Magazine*, undertook to vindicate him, and I think with success, although I must speak with deference on a subject of this nature. The same writer endeavours to account for Bishop BURNETT's manuscript "History of his own Times," not having been deposited in any public library, of which also our author complains; but he was either unconvinced or neglectful, for in the subsequent editions of the IDLER, he made no alteration in these passages. It cannot be concealed that on some occasions Dr. JOHNSON was obstinately averse to withdraw what he had once advanced, although he might without shame or loss of fame have confessed that he had himself discovered reason to change his opinion, or had been convinced by his opponent. In one instance only in this work, he recalled what he had asserted: finding that some of his remarks on imprisonment for debt in Nos. 22 and 38, were founded on an erroneous calculation, he acknowledges this in the second edition.

* 1760, p. 272.

But in the paper in which mention is made of HALE'S Pleas of the Crown, he retains, very probably contrary to remonstrance, an expression of extraordinary harshness, "The authenticity of CLARENDON'S History, though printed with the sanction of one of the first Universities of the world, had not an unexpected manuscript been accidentally discovered, would, with the help of factious incredulity, have been brought into question by the two lowest of all human beings, a scribbler for a party, and a Commissioner of Excise." The persons alluded to were Mr. JOHN OLDMIXON, and GEORGE DUCKET, Esq. The character of OLDMIXON may be given up without regret, but certainly our author lived to prove that a writer for a party is not one of the two lowest of human beings, and might in his cooler moments allow that a Commissioner of Excise is not *ex officio* the other.

It was, however, a failing in this otherwise excellent and illustrious character, that by such means he sometimes committed his occasional ill-humour to paper, and that even in works where it might have been thought there was little temptation to indulge it. His opinion of Commissioners of Excise in the IDLER is, in truth, a sequel to his definition of *Excise* in his Dictionary; "a hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but by wretches hired by those to whom Excise is paid." Mr. BOSWELL was informed that the Commissioners of Excise being offended by this severe reflection, consulted Mr. MURRAY, then Attorney-General, and after-

wards the celebrated Earl of MANSFIELD, to know whether redress could be legally obtained, and Mr. MURRAY's opinion is said to have been, that the passage might be considered as actionable, but that it would be more prudent in the Board not to prosecute. Dr. JOHNSON, who probably heard of this application, and was unfriendly to the government-measures of the time, not only made no alteration in his subsequent editions, in the definition, which indeed yet remains, but carried his animosity still farther by the contemptuous mention of the character of a Commissioner in the IDLER.

This obstinate retention of what he had once written, can be exemplified in other words, to the definitions of which we may suppose many objections would be made, and sometimes not without justice. A lady once asked him how he came to define *pastern*, the "*knee* of a horse," and he candidly pleaded ignorance, but suffered it to remain for several editions. He retained his definition of *pension* also, although it gave his enemies a momentary triumph over him. *Alias*, under which he had introduced his contempt for "Mallett, *alias* Malloch," the prostitute editor of BOLINGBROKE's posthumous works, was not until after many years changed to "Simson *alias* Smith." He gave Mr. BOSWELL another instance of his indulgence of private feelings, at the expense of living characters. "You know, Sir, Lord GOWER forsook the old Jacobite interest. When I came to the word *Renegado*, after telling that it meant one who deserts to the enemy, a revolter, I added, *sometimes we say a* GOWER. Thus it went to press: but

the printer* had more wit than I, and struck it out." The same spirit of discontent with public men and measures induced him in No. 11, to describe the attendant on a Court, as one "whose business it is to watch the looks of a being, weak and foolish as himself." Why he should retain sentiments which he afterwards would have deemed unjust or irreverent, can only be accounted for by supposing that he had forgot, or was not required to correct them. In private life, he was by no means reluctant to acknowledge an error, and especially if it had been attended with injury or uneasiness to any individual. Nor ought it to be omitted in this place that his capricious definitions were sometimes directed against himself. We are indebted to his Biographer for pointing out two cases in which he alludes with ridiculing pleasantry to his own occupation. "*Grub-street*, the name of a street, much inhabited by writers of small histories, *dictionaries*, and temporary poems:" and, "*Lexicographer*, a writer of Dictionaries, a *harmless drudge*, that busies himself in tracing the original, and detailing the signification of words."

The reflections on death in No. 41, were the first effusion of the author's sorrow on the death of his mother, which afflicted him in no common degree. Whoever has lost an affectionate mother, will think he has sometimes treated her with less respest than he ought, and to good minds such reflections, although perhaps

* Mr. NICHOLS properly reminds me, "his steady and intelligent friend, Mr. STRAHAN."

without much foundation, have often bee found to embitter the loss of parents. To th event in Dr. JOHNSON's history, we owe imm diately the composition of his much-admire RASSELAS, written with the affectionate purpo of defraying the expenses of his mother's fu neral, and of paying some small debts she lef The cause gave inspiration and vigour to hi pen. He told Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS that h composed it in the evenings of one week, sen it to press as it was written, and had neve since read it over. Such a fact must raise our admiration of the astonishing powers which enabled him to defy the common interruptions, or lapses of memory, and to neglect without injury he precautions which all writers have found necessary in order to compose a regular whole. Nor was it in the prime of life only, that his faculties were thus at command and independent of the usual guards against error and confusion. I am enabled to add, upon incontestable authority, that in his latter days, *when the strong man bowed himself*, he wrote his "Lives of the Poets" in the same desultory manner*.

Mr. BOSWELL adverts to the general want of mottos in this paper, for which he is unable to account, as he had heard Dr. JOHNSON commend the custom, and never could be at a loss for one, his memory being stored with innumerable passages of the classics. The author told Mrs. PIOZZI, however, that "this practice was forborne, the better to conceal himself and

* From the information of Mr. NICHOLS, who printed the first edition of the Lives.

cape discovery." I should be sorry to add to e many doubts already expressed of the accu-cy of this lady's memory, by calling in ques-n this excuse; but surely no writer ever had wer means and less art to escape discovery. 'hat could the absence of a motto do to conceal r. JOHNSON's style? Sitting, however, with this 'ely lady one day, he recollected a few mot-s, which she wrote down, and which are re copied as part of the history of the IDLER:

r No. 39. *Nec genus ornatus unum, quod quamque decebit*
Eligat———OV. ARS AMAN. 3. 135

No. 17. *Surge tandem Carnifex*—MÆCENAS to AUGUSTUS.

No. 88. *Hodie quid egiste?*

No. 22. *Oh. nomen dulce libertatis! Oh jus eximium nostræ civitatis.* CIC.

No. 62, 64. *Quid faciam? præscribe.*
Quiescas. HOR.

No. 101. *Carpe hilaris—fuget heu! non revocanda dies.*

No. 96. *Qui se volet esse potentem,*
Animos domet ille feroces:
Nec victa libidine colla,
Fœdis submittat habenis. BOETHIUS.

No. 71. *Celan le selve angui, leoni, ed orgi*
Dentro il lor verde. AMINTA DEL TASSO.

No. 46. *Fugit ad salices, sed se cupit ante videri.* VIRG.

During the publication of the IDLERS, they ere frequently copied into contemporary publi-tions, without any acknowledgment. The au-or who, as already mentioned, was also a oprietor of the Universal Chronicle, hurled s vengeance on these pirates in the following

"Hue and Cry," which as coming from J JOHNSON'S pen, may justly be deemed a liter curiosity.

"London, Jan. 5, 1759. ADVERTISEME The proprietors of the paper, entitled "T Idler," having found that those essays are ser serted in the newspapers and magazines with little regard to justice or decency, that the Universal Chronicle, in which they first appear, is not always mentioned, think it necessary to declare to the publishers of those collections, that however patiently they have hitherto endured these injuries, made yet more injurious by contempt, they have now determined to endure them no longer. They have already seen essays, for which a very large price is paid, transferred with the most shameless rapacity, into the weekly or monthly compilations, and their right, at least for the present, alienated from them, before they could themselves be said to enjoy it. But they would not willingly be thought to want tenderness even for men by whom no tenderness hath been shewn. The past is without remedy, and shall be without resentment. But those who have been thus busy with their sickles in the fields of their neighbours, are henceforward to take notice, that the time of impunity is at an end. Whoever shall, without our leave, lay the hand of rapine upon our papers, is to expect that we shall vindicate our due, by the means which justice prescribes, and which are warranted by the immemorial prescriptions of honourable trade. We shall lay hold, in our turn, on their copies, degrade them from the pomp of wide margin, and dif-

fuse typography, contract them into a narrow space, and sell them at an humble price; yet not with a view of growing rich by confiscations, for we think not much better of money got by punishment than by crimes: we shall, therefore, when our losses are repaid, give what profit shall remain to the Magdalens: for we know not who can be more properly taxed for the support of penitent prostitutes, than prostitutes in whom there yet appears neither penitence nor shame."——

The effect of this singular manifesto is not now known; but if "essays for which a large price has been paid," be not words of course, they may prove that the author received an immediate renumeration for his labour, independent of his share in the general profits.

When the second edition appeared, the author informed his readers that "from the 9, 15, 33, 42, 54, 67, 76, 79, 82, 93, 96 and 98th papers, he claimed no other praise than that of having given them to the public." The short letter in No. 9, was from an unknown correspondent, but the remarks on it are evidently Dr. JOHNSON'S. Nos. 15, 42, 54 and 98, are also from correspondents whose names have not been discovered.

Nos. 33, 93 and 96, were written by Mr. THOMAS WARTON. Of these No. 33, is a paper of genuine humour, the Journal of a Senior Fellow, but Dr. JOHNSON thought proper to omit some parts, and to introduce it with a remark "that the Journal of the Citizen in the SPECTATOR has almost precluded the attempt of any future writer." Many imitations, however, of that Jour-

nal may be found in these volumes, and although they cannot be said to equal ADDISON'S original sketch, have considerable merit in placing idleness and dissipation in a ridiculous light. It is curious, if not important, to trace the history of certain species of humour. The annotators or the SPECTATOR inform us that the Citizen's Journal was a banter on the member of a congregation of dissenters called Independents, where a Mr. NESBIT officiated at that time as minister. The person ridiculed "led just such a life as is described and ridiculed here, and was continually asking or quoting his pastor's opinion on every subject." It is too extravagant, however, for truth, although we have in ASHMOLE'S Diary some particulars as trifling as any the citizen has recorded.——No. 93, is a humorous portrait of a citizen whose employments and sentiments are misplaced, and No. 96 is a short tale calculated to demonstrate the miseries of effeminacy and luxury.

The writer of these, THOMAS WARTON, the younger brother of Dr. JOSEPH WARTON *, was born in the year 1728, and probably received his education at Winchester school. At the age of sixteen, he was entered a commoner at Oxford. Like the greater part of the ESSAYISTS, he began his literary career as a poet. In 1745 he published five pastoral eclogues, beautifully descriptive of the miseries of war, to which the shepherds of Germany were exposed: in 1745, "The Pleasures of Melancholy:" in 1746 "The Progress of Discontent:" in 1750, a very cele-

* See Preface to the ADVENTURER.

brated poem, "The Triumph of Isis: in 1751, "Newmarket, a Satire," and "An Ode for Music:" in 1762 several Poems in the "Oxford Sausage." These he reprinted in one volume in 1777: and in 1782, wrote verses on Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS' painted Window in new College Chapel, and from 1785, when he succeeded to the Laureatship, to 1790, various New Years and Birth-day Odes. His prose works were "Observations on the Faerie Queene of Spenser, 1754: "A description of Winchester:" "The Life of Sir Thomas Pope," first published in the Biographia, and republished in 1772. "The Life and Literary Remains of Ralph Bathurst, M. D. 1761." "History of English Poetry," from the close of the 11th to the commencement of the 18th century, vol. 1, 1774, vol. 2, 1778, vol. 3, 1781, "Specimen of a History of Oxfordshire, 1783." "An Enquiry into the authenticity of the Poems attributed to Rowley, 1782." He was also Editor of "*Anthologiæ Græcæ a Constantino Cephalâ conditæ libri tres*, 1766;" "*Theocritis Syracusii quæ supersunt, cum Scholiis Græcis*, 1770:" and of "Poems on several occasions by Milton, with notes critical and explanatory, 1785." He also condescended to improve from time to time that useful little book, The Oxford Guide, the last edition of which interleaved, and with some unpublished MS notes is in the possession of the present writer.

In all these works, Mr. WARTON displayed qualities which are rarely united, the taste and imagination of the poet with the industry and research of the antiquary. His fame, on both these accounts, will probably rest on his "His-

tory of Poetry," which has been justly said to exhibit the most singular combination of extraordinary talents and attainments: but in all his writings there are excellencies which mark the universal scholar, and the profound critic.

His disposition, with some appearance of indolence, was retired and studious, and he fortunately acquired such preferments as enabled him to pursue his natural bent, and rove unmolested among the treasures of learning which his *alma mater* contains in such profusion. In 1751, he succeeded to a fellowship of his college (Trinity), which administered ease and independence. In 1771, his income was augmented by the living of Kiddington, in Oxfordshire, presented to him by the Earl of LICHFIELD. His time was now devoted to his various literary pursuits, which, however, he occasionally relieved by associating with the most distinguished of his learned contemporaries, among whom his conversation was easy and gay, with a mixture of humour and anecdote, of entertainment and information which will be long remembered at Oxford. He had less polish in his manner than his brother Dr. JOSEPH, but the conversation of the two together was a rich banquet.

In 1785, he was appointed Poet Laureat in the room of Mr. WHITEHEAD, and gave new dignity to this office by the original turn and manly taste of his Odes, which were soon distinguished as elegant compositions, and defied the ridicule which had been so plentifully bestowed on his predecessors, CIBBER and WHITEHEAD. About the same time, he was yet more honoured by being appointed successor to Dr. (now Sir

WILLIAM) SCOTT, as Camden Professor of Ancient History. *Sol occubuit, nox nulla secuta est.*

Until he reached his sixty-second year he continued to enjoy vigorous and uninterrupted health. On being seized with the gout, he went to Bath, and flattered himself on his return to college, that he was in a fair way of recovery; but the change that had taken place in his constitution was visible to his friends. On Thursday, May 20, 1790, he passed the evening in the common room of his college, and was for some time more chearful than usual. Between ten and eleven o'clock he was struck with the palsy, and continued insensible to his death, which happened the next day at two o'clock. On the 27th his remains were interred in Trinity College chapel, with all the respect due to one who had merited so well of the University, by showing how honourably and profitably to literature and to mankind, a college life may be spent.

At the time Mr. WARTON wrote his three papers in the IDLER, he lived in habits of intimacy and correspondence with Dr. JOHNSON: he was also a member of the Literary Club, and made occasional journies to London, to attend that, and to enjoy the pleasure of Sir JOSHUA REYNOLD'S company, of whom some notice is now to be taken as a writer in this work. It is a proud circumstance to be able to enrol so great a name among the ESSAYISTS.

What may be termed the incidents of Sir JOSHUA'S life are but few. Like that of a scholar, it was a life of labour and study, and less inter-

rupted by common events, or unexpected vicissitudes, than that of most men. For a long period of forty years, it was a glorious career of well-earned and well-rewarded fame, of fame which few can ever hope to attain, and from which none can wish to detract.

He was born at Plympton, in Devonshire, July 16, 1723.* His ancestors on both sides were clergymen; a descent, which, although it excludes the recollection of birth and rank, may yet be connected with the honourable claims of hereditary wisdom and virtue. His father had no adequate provision for the maintainance of his large family, but appears to have liberally encouraged his son's early attempts in that art, of which he afterwards became so illustrious a professor. When but eight years of age, Joshua had made himself master of a treatise, entitled "The Jesuits Perspective," and increased his love of the art still more, by studying Richardson's "Treatise on Painting." In his seventeenth year, he was placed as a pupil under his countryman, Mr. HUDSON, whom, in consequence of some disagreement, he left in 1743, and removed to Devonshire for three years, during which, after some waste of time, which he ever lamented, he sat down seriously to the study and practice of his art. The first of his performances, which brought him into notice, was the portrait of Captain HAMILTON, father of the present Marquis of ABERCORN, painted in

* It is perhaps unnecessary to say, that I am indebted for much of this account to Mr. MALONE's valuable sketch of Sir JOSHUA's Life, prefixed to his Works.

1746. About this time he appears to have returned to London.

In 1749, by the friendship of Captain, afterwards Lord KEPPEL, he had an opportunity to visit the shores of the Mediterranean, and to pass some time at Rome. The sketch he wrote of his feelings when he first contemplated the works of RAFFAELE in the Vatican, so honourable to his modesty and candour, has been presented to the public by Mr. MALONE, and is a present of which every artist may attest the high value.

He returned to London in 1752, and soon rose to the head of his profession; an honour which did not depend so much on those he eclipsed, as on his retaining that situation for the whole of a long life, by powers unrivalled in his own or any other country. Soon after his return from Italy, his acquaintance with Dr. JOHNSON commenced. Mr. BOSWELL has furnished us with abundant proofs of their mutual esteem and congenial spirit, and Mr. MALONE has added the more deliberate opinion of Sir JOSHUA respecting Dr. JOHNSON, which may be introduced here without impropriety. It reflects indeed as much honour on the writer as on the subject, and was to have formed part of a discourse to the Academy, which, from the specimen Mr. MALONE has given, it is much to be regretted, he did not live to finish.

Speaking of his own discourses, our great artist says, "Whatever merit they have, must be imputed, in a great measure, to the education which I may be said to have had under Dr. JOHNSON. I do not mean to say, though it cer-

tainly would be to the credit of these discourses, if I could say it with truth, that he contributed even a single sentiment to them: but he qualified my mind to think justly. No man had, like him, the faculty of teaching inferior minds the art of thinking. Perhaps other men might have equal knowledge, but few were so communicative. His great pleasure was to talk to those who looked up to him. It was here he exhibited his wonderful powers. In mixed company, and frequently in company that *ought* to have looked up to him, many, thinking they had a character for learning to support, considered it as beneath them to enlist in the train of his auditors: and to such persons he certainly did not appear to advantage, being often impetuous and overbearing. The desire of shining in conversation was in him indeed a predominant passion; and if it must be attributed to vanity, let it at the same time be recollected, that it produced that loquaciousness from which his more intimate friends derived considerable advantage. The observations which he made on poetry, on life, and on every thing about us, I applied to our art, with what success others must judge."—When we peruse such a character of Dr. JOHNSON, from the pen of Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS, it is natural to ask what must become of the puny attempts of inferior writers to diminish the fame, and insult the memory, of of our great moralist?

In consequence of his connection with Dr. JOHNSON, Mr. REYNOLDS furnished the three Essays in the IDLER. No. 76, on False Criticisms on Painting, which may be recommended

to the serious perusal of many modern connoisseurs; No. 79, on the Grand Style of Painting, and No. 82, on the True Idea of Beauty; of which Mr. BOSWELL informs us the last words, "and pollute his canvas with deformity," were added by Dr. JOHNSON. These Essays have been very properly incorporated with Sir JOSHUA'S works, by Mr. MALONE, as they were his first literary attempts, the earnest of those talents which afterwards proved that he was as eminent in the theory as in the practice of his art.

The acknowledged superiority of Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS' professional talents, and the broad basis on which it is founded, makes it now unnecessary to be collecting suffrages to add weight to the general opinion, but a review of those powers which rank him as a man of genius, and distinguish him among the most eminent of his profession, may not be without its interest.

His early education was not strictly academic, as he himself regrets; nor to any extent did he ever cultivate the elementary principles of design, but, as Portraits were to shape his fortune, facility of composition, or laborious application to the refinements of an outline, were less necessary. Whether he would have been as eminent in Historical Painting as he was in that department which it was his lot to pursue, would be now an inquiry as useless as unsatisfactory. That his powers were great in whatever way they were employed, will be readily acknowledged; his taste was too refined, and his judgment too correct, to tolerate defects which were not counterbalanced by some advantages; but as his early practice was exclusively devoted to Portraits,

and as it was the chief employment of his whole life, it cannot remain a subject of choice to what branch of his profession a fair analysis of his merit ought to be referred.

From the first examples of Sir JOSHUA, as well as from his own confession, on seeing the works of RAFFAELE in the Vatican, it would seem evident that the ornamental parts of the art had absorbed his previous studies, and made the deepest impression on his mind. Little, therefore, could be wanting to induce him to pursue that plan of study, which at the same time that it was the most congenial to his feelings, was in the highest degree important to give interest to individual representation. In pursuing his studies when abroad, he embraced the whole field before him: but his time was not spent in collecting or making servile copies, but in contemplating the PRINCIPLES of the great Masters, that he might the more effectually do what he has recommended to others, follow them in the road without treading in their steps; and no man ever appropriated to himself with more admirable ſkill their extensive and varied powers.

The style of Portrait-painting by HUDSON and RAMSAY, who were the only persons of any practice when Sir JOSHUA returned from abroad, was uniformly dry and hard, without any feeling for *Chiar-oscura*, and with little diversity of attitude and expression; the full dress, which the custom of the day prescribed, prescribed also limits to their imaginations, and they never gave themselves the trouble to discriminate between the character of nature, and the character of fashion. Sir JOSHUA, with a more compre-

hensive view of his art, shewed how *Portrait* might be generalized, so as to identify the individual man with the dignity of his thinking powers. In dress, he selected and adopted what was most conformable to the character of his subject, without implicitly following the fashion or offending the prejudice which it begets.

In the pursuit of those high attainments to which he arrived, he evidently had REMBRANT and CORREGGIO more particularly in his mind. The magical effect, and richness of colouring of the Dutch master, seems to have been with him a constant source of reflection and experiment to rival his inimitable powers. CORREGGIO gave all that grace and harmony could supply, and Sir JOSHUA in his infantine portraits, is beyond all competition without an equal. His female portraits are also designed with an exquisite feeling of taste and elegance; and for that variety of composition which pervades his works, it will be in vain to seek a rival in the most illustrious of his predecessors.

His works of the historical kind shew great strength of mind, and leave us to regret that this land of portrait-painting had not given him equal opportunity to cultivate it; but, from the want of that habit which practice would have given him, he was used to say, that historical effort cost him too much. He better knew what he wanted than possessed a promptitude of giving form and substance to his feelings. His *Count Ugolino*, for pathos and grandeur of design, perhaps yields to no composition that was ever made of that subject, and his *Holy Family*, *when combined* with it, will serve to shew, at

one view, the comprehensiveness and diversity of his genius.

The colouring of Sir JOSHUA, which has been deservedly the subject of the highest admiration and praise, has also been the most familiar topic of animadversion and censure. By the jocose he has been charged with "coming off with flying colours," but by less indulgent friends with the more serious accusation, of having made experiments at their expense. In the pursuit of excellence, he was certainly not content with the common routine of practice; and, as he thought for himself, so he invented new methods of embodying those thoughts. That he was sometimes unsuccessful cannot be denied; but one failure seems to have had a hundred voices to report it, and in arithmetical proportion to have increased as envy was created by his transcendent superiority. Upon due reflection, however, when the space is considered through which he passed to arrive at the high professional rank he acquired: there can be little doubt that the astonishment will be, not at the many, but the few exceptionable works he produced; and even of these it is no hyperbole to say, that as long as the true principles of art are admired, his "faded pictures" will be found to possess a power of mind, which has not often been surpassed even by the best productions of his own time.*

* For this character of Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS, as an artist, I am indebted to my friend RICHARD DUPPA, Esq. whose last publication of a "Selection of Heads from MICHAEL ANGELO and RAFFAELE," betoken a taste and genius beyond my praise.

The personal character of this illustrious artist has been so amply detailed by Mr. MALONE that nothing here can be added, although it were easy to accumulate encomiums on one of whom all men spoke well, and in whom it has been found so difficult to discover any prominent failings. It is only necessary to add, that the nation was deprived of this bright ornament on February 23, 1792, and that his funeral was conducted with all the honours that could be shewn to genius by the grateful and the enlightened.

No. 67, a paper of some humour, containing a journal of the interruptions incident to a literary life, and in which there are hits not inapplicable to Dr. JOHNSON, was written by another intimate and affectionate friend, BENNET LANGTON, Esq. of Langton in Lincolnshire. His acquaintance with Dr. JOHNSON commenced soon after the conclusion of the RAMBLER, which Mr. LANGTON, then a youth, had read with so much admiration, that, Mr. BOSWELL informs us, he came to London chiefly with a view of endeavouring to be introduced to its author. Nothing is more pleasing than to contemplate the characters of those men, many of them distinguished by rank as well as talents, who were attracted towards JOHNSON by their admiration of a book in which nothing is flattered which men have agreed to flatter, and in which no tenderness is shown to public prejudice or private folly.

Mr. LANGTON died December 18, 1801, and is third of the ESSAYISTS of the Old School, of whom the world has been deprived since the commencement of the present edition. The

other two are RICHARD OWEN CAMBRIDGE, Esq. and Mrs. CHAPONE.

When the IDLER was about to be reprinted in two volumes 12mo. the author revised it with great care, and made several alterations, but I know not to what extent, as I have been unable to procure a complete series of the originals. From the few in my possession, however, I am inclined to think, that although he took not less pains than with the RAMBLER, he found less occasion to alter these short and generally light compositions. The first and last papers have some very considerable omissions and additions. No. 22, of the original edition, was wholly omitted; it is not easy to say why. It is reprinted at the close of the present edition.

THE IDLER.

No. 1. SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1758.

Vacui sub umbra
Lusimus.

HOR.

Those who attempt periodical essays seem to be often stopped in the beginning by the difficulty of finding a proper title. Two writers, since the time of the *Spectator*, have assumed his name, without any pretensions to lawful inheritance; an effort was once made to revive the *Tatler*; and the strange appellations, by which other papers have been called, show that the authors were distressed, like the natives of *America*, who come to the *Europeans* to beg a name.

It will be easily believed of the *Idler*, that if his title had required any search, he never would have found it. Every mode of life has its conveniences. The *Idler*, who habituates himself to be satisfied with what he can most easily obtain, not only escapes labours which are often fruitless, but sometimes succeeds better than those who despise all that is within their reach, and think every thing more valuable as it is harder to be acquired.

If similitude of manners be a motive to kindness, the *Idler* may flatter himself with universal patronage. There is no single character under which such numbers are comprised. Every man is, or hopes to be, an *Idler*. Even those who seem to differ most from us are hastening to increase our fraternity; as peace is the end of war, so to be idle is the ultimate purpose of the busy.

There is, perhaps, no appellation by which a writer can better denote his kindred to the human species. It has been found hard to describe man by an adequate definition. Some philosophers have called him a reasonable animal; but others have considered reason as a quality of which many creatures partake. He has been termed, likewise, a laughing animal; but it is said that some men have never laughed. Perhaps man may be more properly distinguished as an idle animal; for there is no man who is not sometimes idle. It is at least a definition from which none that shall find it in this paper can be excepted; for who can be more idle than the reader of the *Idler*?

That the definition may be complete, idleness must be not only the general, but the peculiar characteristic of man; and, perhaps, man is the only being that can properly be called idle, that does by others what he might do himself, or sacrifices duty or pleasure to the love of ease.

Scarcely any name can be imagined from which less envy or competition is to be dreaded. The *Idler* has no rivals or enemies. The man of business forgets him; the man of enterprise despises him; and though such as tread the same track of life fall commonly into jealousy and discord, *Idlers* are always found to associate in peace; and he who is most *famed for doing* nothing, is glad to meet another as *idle as himself.*

What is to be expected from this paper, whether it will be uniform or various, learned or familiar, serious or gay, political or moral, continued or interrupted, it is hoped that no reader will inquire. That the *Idler* has some scheme, cannot be doubted; for to form schemes is the *Idler*'s privilege. But though he has many projects in his head, he is now grown sparing of communication, having observed, that his hearers are apt to remember what he forgets himself; that his tardiness of execution exposes him to the encroachments of those who catch a hint and fall to work; and that very specious plans, after long contrivance and pompous displays, have subsided in weariness without a trial, and without miscarriage have been blasted by derision.

Something the *Idler*'s character may be supposed to promise. Those that are curious after diminutive history, who watch the revolutions of families, and the rise and fall of characters either male or female, will hope to be gratified by this paper; for the *Idler* is always inquisitive and seldom retentive. He that delights in obloquy and satire, and wishes to see clouds gathering over any reputation that dazzles him with its brightness, will snatch up the *Idler*'s essays with a beating heart. The *Idler* is naturally censorious; those who attempt nothing themselves, think every thing easily performed, and consider the unsuccessful always as criminal.

I think it necessary to give notice, that I make no contract, nor incur any obligation. If those who depend on the *Idler* for intelligence and entertainment, should suffer the disappointment which commonly follows ill-placed expectations, they are to lay the blame only on themselves.

Yet hope is not wholly to be cast away. The *Idler, though sluggish*, is yet alive, and may sometimes be stimulated to vigour and activity. He may

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Yet hope is not wholly to be cast away. The *Idler*, though sluggish, is yet alive, and may sometimes be stimulated to vigour and activity. He may

descend into profoundness, or tower into sublimity; for the diligence of an *Idler* is rapid and impetuous, as ponderous bodies forced into velocity move with violence proportionate to their weight.

But these vehement exertions of intellect cannot be frequent, and he will therefore gladly receive help from any correspondent, who shall enable him to please without his own labour. He excludes no style, he prohibits no subject; only let him that writes to the *Idler* remember, that his letters must not be long; no words are to be squandered in declaration of esteem, or confessions of inability; conscious dulness has little right to be prolix, and praise is not so welcome to the *Idler* as quiet.

N°. 2. SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 1758.

Toto vix quater anno
Membranam.

HOR.

Many positions are often on the tongue, and seldom in the mind; there are many truths which every human being acknowledges and forgets. It is generally known, that he who expects much will be often disappointed; yet disappointment seldom cures us of expectation, or has any other effect than that of producing a moral sentence, or peevish exclamation. He that embarks in the voyage of life, will always wish to advance rather by the impulse of the wind, than the strokes of the oar; and many

under in the passage, while they lie waiting for the ıle that is to waft them to their wish.

It will naturally be suspected that the *Idler* has tely suffered some disappointment, and that he does ɔt talk thus gravely for nothing. No man is re- ıired to betray his own secrets. I will, however, ɔnfess, that I have now been a writer almost a week, ıd have not yet heard a single word of praise, nor :eived one hint from any correspondent.

Whence this negligence proceeds I am not able ɔ discover. Many of my predecessors have thought ıemselves obliged to return their acknowledgments ı the second paper, for the kind reception of the rst; and in a short time apologies have become ecessary to those ingenious gentlemen and ladies :hose performances, though in the highest degree legant and learned, have been unavoidably de- ayed.

What then will be thought of me, who, having xperienced no kindness, have no thanks to return; vhom no gentleman or lady has yet enabled to give ıy cause of discontent, and who have, therefore, ıo opportunity of showing how skilfully I can pacify esentmemt, extenuate negligence, or palliate rejec- ion?

I have long known that splendour of reputation is ıot to be counted among the necessaries of life, and herefore shall not much repine if praise be withheld ill it is better deserved. But surely I may be al- owed to complain that, in a nation of authors, not ɔne has thought me worthy of notice after so fair an nvitation,

At the time when the rage of writing has seized :he old and the young, when the cook warbles her yrics in the kitchen, and the thrasher vociferates ıis heroics in the barn: when our traders deal out

knowledge in bulky volumes, and our girls forsake their samplers to teach kingdoms wisdom, it may seem very unnecessary to draw any more from their proper occupations, by affording new opportunities of literary fame.

I should be, indeed, unwilling to find that, for the sake of corresponding with the *Idler*, the smith's iron had cooled on the anvil, or the spinster's distaff stood unemployed. I solicit only the contributions of those who have already devoted themselves to literature, or, without any determinate intention, wander at large through the expanse of life, and wear out the day in hearing at one place what they utter at another.

Of these, a great part are already writers. One has a friend in the country upon whom he exercises his powers; whose passions he raises and depresses; whose understanding he perplexes with paradoxes, or strengthens by argument; whose admiration he courts, whose praises he enjoys; and who serves him instead of a senate or a theatre; as the young soldiers in the *Roman* camp learned the use of their weapons by fencing against a post in the place of an enemy.

Another has his pockets filled with essays and epigrams, which he reads from house to house, to select parties, and which his acquaintances are daily entreating him to withhold no longer from the impatience of the public.

If among these any one is persuaded that, by such preludes of composition, he has qualified himself to appear in the open world, and is yet afraid of those censures which they who have already written, and they who cannot write, are equally ready to fulminate against public pretenders to fame, he may, by transmitting his performances to the *Idler*, make a cheap experiment of his abilities, and enjoy the

pleasure of success, without the hazard of miscarriage.

Many advantages not generally known arise from this method of stealing on the public. The standing auther of the paper is always the object of critical malignity. Whatever is mean will be imputed to him, and whatever is excellent be ascribed to his assistants. It does not much alter the event, that the auther and his correspondents are equally unknown; for the auther, whoever he be, is an individual, of whom every reader has some fixed idea, and whom he is, therefore, unwilling to gratify with applause; but the praises given to his correspondents are scattered in the air, none can tell on whom they will light, and therefore none are unwilling to bestow them.

He that is known to contribute to a periodical work, needs no other caution than not to tell what particular pieces are his own; such secrecy is, indeed, very difficult; but if it can be maintained, it is scarcely to be imagined at how small an expence he may grow considerable.

A person of quality, by a single paper, may engross the honour of a volume. Fame is, indeed, dealt with a hand less and less bounteous through the subordinate ranks, till it descends to the professed auther, who will find it very difficult to get more than he deserves; but every man who does not want it, or who needs not value it, may have liberal allowances; and, for five letters in the year sent to the *Idler*, of which perhaps only two are printed, will be promoted to the first rank of writers by those who are weary of the present race of wits, and wish to sink them into obscurity before the lustre of a name not yet known enough to be detested.

N°. 3. SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 1758.

Otia vitæ
Solamur cantu.

STAT.

It has long been the complaint of those who frequent the theatres, that all the dramatic art has been long exhausted, and that the vicissitudes of fortune, and accidents of life, have been shown in every possible combination, till the first scene informs us of the last, and the play no sooner opens, than every auditor knows how it will conclude. When a conspiracy is formed in a tragedy we guess by whom it will be detected; when a letter is dropt in a comedy we can tell by whom it will be found. Nothing is now left for the poet but character and sentiment, which are to make their way as they can, without the soft anxiety of suspense, or the enlivening agitation of surprise.

A new paper lies under the same disadvantages as a new play. There is danger lest it be new without novelty. My earlier predecessors had their choice of vices and follies, and selected such as were most likely to raise merriment or attract attention; they had the whole field of life before them, untrodden and unsurveyed; characters of every kind shot up in their way, and those of the most luxuriant growth, or most conspicuous colours, were naturally cropt by the first sickle. They that follow are forced to peep into neglected corners, to note the casual varieties of the same species, and to

:commend themselves by minute industry, and disnctions too subtle for common eyes.

Sometimes it may happen that the haste or negli-ence of the first inquirers has left enough behind) reward another search; sometimes new objects :art up under the eye, and he that is looking for one ind of matter, is amply gratified by the discovery f another. But still it must be allowed, that, as ıore is taken, less can remain; and every truth rought newly to light impoverishes the mine, from 'hich succeeding intellects are to dig their trea-ures.

Many philosophers imagine that the elements hemselves may be in time exhausted; that the sun, ıy shining long, will effuse all its light; and that, by he continual waste of aqueous particles, the whole arth will at last become a sandy desert.

I would not advise my readers to disturb themelves by contriving how they shall live without light ınd water. For the days of universal thirst and per-ɔetual darkness are at a great distance. The ocean ınd the sun will last our time, and we may leave ɔosterity to shift for themselves.

But if the stores of nature are limited, much more narrow bounds must be set to the modes of life; and mankind may want a moral or amusing paper, many years before they shall be deprived of drink or daylight. This want, which to the busy and the inventive may seem easily remediable by some substitute or other, the whole race of *Idlers* will feel with all the sensibility that such torpid animals can suffer.

When I consider the innumerable multitudes that, having no motive of desire, or determination of will, lie freezing in perpetual inactivity, till some external impulse puts them in motion; who awake in the morning, vacant of thought, with minds gaping for the intellectual food, which some kind essayist has

been accustomed to supply, I am moved by the commiseration with which all human beings ought to behold the distresses of each other, to try some expedients for their relief, and to inquire by what methods the listless may be actuated, and the empty be replenished.

There are said to be pleasures in madness known only to madmen. There are certainly miseries in idleness which the *Idler* only can conceive. These miseries I have often felt and often bewailed. I know by experience how welcome is every avocation that summons the thoughts to a new image; and how much languor and lassitude are relieved by that officiousness which offers a momentary amusement to him who is unable to find it for himself.

It is naturally indifferent to this race of men what entertainment they receive, so they are but entertained. They catch, with equal eagerness, at a moral lecture, or the memoirs of a robber; a prediction of the appearance of a comet, or the calculation of the chances of a lottery.

They might, therefore, easily be pleased if they consulted only their own minds; but those who will not take the trouble to think for themselves, have always somebody that thinks for them; and the difficulty of writing is to please those from whom others learn to be pleased.

Much mischief is done in the world with very little interest or design. He that assumes the character of a critic, and justifies his claim by perpetual censure, imagines that he is hurting none but the auther, and him he considers as a pestilent animal, whom every other being has a right to persecute; little does he think how many harmless men he involves in his own guilt, by teaching them to be noxious without malignity, and to repeat objections which they do not understand; or how many honest minds

he debars from pleasure, by exciting an artificial fastidiousness, and making them too wise to concur with their own sensations. He who is taught by a critic to dislike that which pleased him in his natural state, has the same reason to complain of his instructor, as the madman to rail at his doctor, who, when he thought himself master of Peru, physicked him to poverty.

If men will struggle against their own advantage, they are not to expect that the *Idler* will take much pains upon them; he has himself to please as well as them, and has long learned, or endeavoured to learn, not to make the pleasure of others too necessary to his own.

N°. 4. SATURDAY, MAY 6, 1758.

Πάγλας γὰρ φιλέεσκε.

HOM.

CHARITY, or tenderness for the poor, which is now justly considered, by a great part of mankind, as inseparable from piety, and in which almost all the goodness of the present age consists, is, I think, known only to those who enjoy, either immediately or by transmission, the light of revelation.

Those ancient nations who have given us the wisest models of government, and the brightest examples of patriotism, whose institutions have been transcribed by all succeeding legislatures, and whose history is studied by every candidate for political or military

reputation, have left behind them no mention alm-houses or hospitals, of places where age mi repose, or sickness be relieved.

The *Roman* emperors, indeed, gave large donati to the citizens and soldiers, but these distributi were always reckoned rather popular than virtuo nothing more was intended than an ostentation liberality, nor was any recompence expected, l suffrages and acclamations.

Their beneficence was merely occasional; he tl ceased to need the favour of the people, ceased lil wise to court it; and, therefore, no man though either necessary or wise to make any standing p vision for the needy, to look forwards to the want posterity, or to secure successions of charity, successions of distress.

Compassion is, by some reasoners, on whom t name of philosophers has been too easily confern resolved into an affection merely selfish, an involu tary perception of pain at the involuntary sight o being like ourselves languishing in misery. But t sensation, if ever it be felt at all from the brute stinct of uninstructed nature, will only produce fects desultory and transient; it will never settle i a principle of action or extend relief to calamit unseen, in generations not yet in being.

The devotion of life or fortune to the succour the poor, is a height of virtue to which human has never risen by its own power. The charity the *Mahometans* is a precept which their teacher e dently transplanted from the doctrines of Chri anity: and the care with which some of the Orien sects attend, as it is said, to the necessities of the d eased and indigent, may be added to the other ar ments which prove *Zoroaster* to have borrowed institutions from the law of *Moses*,

The present age, though not likely to shine he

after among the most splendid periods of history, has yet given examples of charity, which may be very properly recommended to imitation. The equal distribution of wealth, which long commerce has produced, does not enable any single hand to raise edifices of piety like fortified cities, to appropriate manors to religious uses, or deal out such large and lasting beneficence as was scattered over the land in ancient times, by those who possessed counties or provinces. But no sooner is a new species of misery brought to view, and a design of relieving it professed, than every hand is open to contribute something, every tongue is busied in solicitation, and every art of pleasure is employed for a time in the interest of virtue.

The most apparent and pressing miseries incident to man, have now their peculiar houses of reception and relief; and there are few among us, raised however little above the danger of poverty, who may not justly claim, what is implored by the *Mahometans* in their most ardent benedictions, the prayers of the poor.

Among those actions which the mind can most securely review with unabated pleasure, is that of having contributed to an hospital for the sick. Of some kinds of charity the consequences are dubious; some evils which beneficence has been busy to remedy, are not certainly known to be very grievous to the sufferer, or detrimental to the community; but no man can question whether wounds and sickness are not really painful; whether it be not worthy of a good man's care to restore those to ease and usefulness, from whose labour infants and women expect their bread, and who, by a casual hurt, or lingering disease, lie pining in want and anguish burthensome to others, and weary of themselves.

Yet, as the hospitals of the present time subsist only by gifts bestowed at pleasure, without any solid fund of support, there is danger lest the blaze of charity, which now burns with so much heat and splendor, should die away for want of lasting fuel; lest fashion should suddenly withdraw her smile, and inconstancy transfer the public attention to something which may appear more eligible, because it will be new.

Whatever is left in the hands of chance must be subject to vicissitude; and when any establishment is found to be useful, it ought to be the next care to make it permanent.

But man is a transitory being, and his designs must partake of the imperfections of their auther. To confer duration is not always in our power. We must snatch the present moment, and employ it well, without too much solicitude for the future, and content ourselves with reflecting that our part is performed. He that waits for an opportunity to do much at once, may breathe out his life in idle wishes, and regret, in the last hour, his useless intentions, and barren zeal.

The most active promoters of the present schemes of charity, cannot be cleared from some instances of misconduct, which may awaken contempt or censure, and hasten that neglect which is likely to come too soon of itself. The open competitions between different hospitals, and the animosity with which their patrons oppose one another, may prejudice weak minds against them all. For it will not be easily believed, that any man can, for good reasons, wish to exclude another from doing good. The spirit of charity can only be continued by a reconciliation of these ridiculous feuds; and therefore, instead of contentions who shall be the only benefactors to the needy, let there be no other struggle than who shall be the first.

№. 5. SATURDAY, MAY 13, 1758.

Κάλλος
Ἀνθ' ἐγκείων ἀπάνθων
Ἀνθ' ἀσπίδων ἀπασῶν.

ANAC.

Our military operations are at last begun; our troops are marching in all the pomp of war, and a camp is marked out on the Isle of Wight: the heart of every Englishman now swells with confidence, though somewhat softened by generous compassion for the consternation and distresses of our enemies.

This formidable armament, and splendid march, produce different effects upon different minds, according to the boundless diversities of temper, occupation, and habits of thought.

Many a tender maiden considers her lover as already lost, because he cannot reach the camp but by crossing the sea; men of a more political understanding are persuaded that we shall now see, in a few days, the ambassadors of France supplicating for pity. Some are hoping for a bloody battle, because a bloody battle makes a vendible narrative; some are composing songs of victory: some planning arches of triumph; and some are mixing fireworks for the celebration of a peace.

Of all extensive and complicated objects different parts are selected by different eyes; and minds are

variously affected, as they vary their attention. The care of the public is now fixed upon our soldiers, who are leaving their native country to wander, none can tell how long, in the pathless deserts of the *Isle of Wight*. The tender sigh for their sufferings, and the gay drink to their success. I who look, or believe myself to look, with more philosophic eyes on human affairs, must confess, that I saw the troops march with little emotion; my thoughts were fixed upon other scenes, and the tear stole into my eyes, not for those who were going away, but for those who were left behind.

We have no reason to doubt but our troops will proceed with proper caution; there are men among them who can take care of themselves. But how shall the ladies endure without them? By what arts can they, who have long had no joy but from the civilities of a soldier, now amuse their hours, and solace their separation?

Of fifty thousand men, now destined to different stations, if we allow each to have been occasionally necessary only to four women, a short computation will inform us, that two hundred thousand ladies are left to languish in distress; two hundred thousand ladies, who must run to sales and auctions without an attendant; sit at the play without a critic to direct their opinion; buy their fans by their own judgment; dispose shells by their own invention; walk in the Mall without a gallant; go to the gardens without a protector; and shuffle cards with vain impatience, for want of a fourth to complete the party.

Of these ladies, some, I hope, have lap-dogs, and some monkies; but they are unsatisfactory companions. Many useful offices are performed by men of scarlet, to which neither dog nor monkey has *adequate abilities*. A parrot, indeed, is as fine as a

colonel, and, if he has been much used to good company, is not wholly without conversation; but a parrot, after all, is a poor little creature, and has neither sword nor shoulder-knot, can neither dance nor play at cards.

Since the soldiers must obey the call of their duty, and go to that side of the kingdom which faces *France*, I know not why the ladies, who cannot live without them, should not follow them. The prejudices and pride of man have long presumed the sword and spindle made for different hands, and denied the other sex to partake the grandeur of military glory. This notion may be consistently enough received in *France*, where the salique law excludes females from the throne; but we, who allow them to be sovereigns, may surely suppose them capable to be soldiers.

It were to be wished that some men, whose experience and authority might enforce regard, would propose that our encampments for the present year should comprise an equal number of men and women, who should march and fight in mingled bodies. If proper colonels were once appointed, and the drums ordered to beat for female volunteers, our regiments would soon be filled without the reproach or cruelty of an impress.

Of these heroines some might serve on foot, under the denomination of the *Female Buffs*, and some on horseback, with the title of *Lady Hussars*.

What objections can be made to this scheme I have endeavoured maturely to consider, and cannot find that a modern soldier has any duties, except that of obedience, which a lady cannot perform. If the coat has lost its powder, a lady has a puff; if a coat is spotted, a lady has a brush. Strength is of less importance since fire arms have been used; blows

of the hand are now seldom exchanged; and what is there to be done in the charge or the retreat beyond the powers of a sprightly maiden?

Our masculine squadrons will not suppose themselves disgraced by their auxiliaries, till they have done something which women could not have done. The troops of *Braddock* never saw their enemies, and perhaps were defeated by women. If our *American* general had headed an army of girls, he might still have built a fort and taken it. Had *Minorca* been defended by a female garrison, it might have been surrendered, as it was, without a breach; and I cannot but think, that seven thousand women might have ventured to look at *Rochefort*, sack a village, rob a vineyard, and return in safety.

No. 6. SATURDAY, MAY 20, 1758.

Ταμίαν ἀρίστης γυναῖκα γυνή.

GR. PRO.

The lady who had undertaken to ride on one horse a thousand miles, in a thousand hours, has completed her journey in little more than two-thirds of the time stipulated, and was conducted through the last mile with triumphal honours. Acclamation shouted before her, and all the flowers of the spring were scattered in her way.

Every heart ought to rejoice when true merit is *distinguished* with public notice. I am far from

wishing either to the Amazon or her horse any diminution of happiness or fame, and cannot but lament that they were not more amply and suitably rewarded.

There was once a time when wreaths of bays or oak were considered as recompenses equal to the most wearisome labours and terrific dangers, and when the miseries of long marches and stormy seas were at once driven from the remembrance by the fragrance of a garland.

If this heroine had been born in ancient times, she might, perhaps, have been delighted with the simplicity of ancient gratitude; or, if any thing was wanting to full satisfaction, she might have supplied the deficiency with the hope of deification, and anticipated the altars that would be raised, and the vows that would be made, by future candidates for equestrian glory, to the patroness of the race, and the goddess of the stable.

But fate reserved her for a more enlightened age, which has discovered leaves and flowers to be transitory things; which considers profit as the end of honour; and rates the event of every undertaking only by the money that is gained or lost. In these days, to strew the road with daisies and lilies is to mock merit, and delude hope. The toyman will not give his jewels, nor the mercer measure out his silks for vegetable coin. A primrose, though picked up under the feet of the most renowned courser, will neither be received as a stake at cards, nor procure a seat at an opera, nor buy candles for a rout, nor lace for a livery. And though there are many virtuosos, whose sole ambition is to possess something which can be found in no other hand, yet some are more accustomed to store their cabinets by theft than purchase, and none of them would either steal or buy

one of the flowers of gratulation till he knov
all the rest are totally destroyed.

Little, therefore, did it avail this wonderf
to be received, however joyfully, with such o
and barren ceremonies of praise. Had the wa
covered with guineas, though but for the ten
of the last mile, she would have considered h
and diligence as not wholly lost; and migl
rejoiced in the speed and perseverance which l
her such superfluity of time, that she could at
gather her reward with the danger of *Att*
miscarriage.

So much ground could not, indeed, hav
paved with gold but at a large expence, and
at present engaged in a war, which demands s
forces frugality. But common rules are ma
for common life, and some deviation from
policy may be allowed in favour of a lady that
thousand miles in a thousand hours.

Since the spirit of antiquity so much p
amongst us, that even on this great occasion v
given flowers instead of money, let us at lea
plete our imitation of the ancients, and endea
transmit to posterity the memory of that virtu
we consider as superior to pecuniary recon
Let an equestrian statue of this heroine be e
near the starting-post on the heath of *Newma*
fill kindred souls with emulation, and tell the
daughters of our grand-daughters what an
maiden has once performed.

As events, however illustrious, are soon obs
they are intrusted to tradition, I think it ne
that the pedestal should be inscribed with a
account of this great performance. The co
tion of this narrative ought not to be con
rashly to improper hands. If the rhetoric
Newmarket, who may be supposed likely to c

in its full strength the dignity of the subject, should undertake to express it, there is danger lest they admit some phrases which, though well understood at present, may be ambiguous in another century. If posterity should read on a public monument, that *the lady carried her horse a thousand miles in a thousand hours*, they may think that the statue and inscription are at variance, because one will represent the horse as carrying his lady, and the other tell that the lady carried her horse.

Some doubts likewise may be raised by speculatists, and some controversies be agitated among historians, concerning the motive as well as the manner of the action. As it will be known that this wonder was performed in a time of war, some will suppose that the lady was frighted by invaders, and fled to preserve her life or her chastity: others will conjecture that she was thus honoured for some intelligence carried of the enemy's designs: some will think that she brought news of a victory: others, that she was commissioned to tell of a conspiracy; and some will congratulate themselves on their acuter penetration, and find, that all these notions of patriotism and public spirit are improbable and chimerical; they will confidently tell, that she only ran away from her guardians, and the true causes of her speed were fear and love.

Let it therefore be carefully mentioned, that by this performance *she won her wager;* and, lest this should, by any change of manners, seem an inadequate or incredible incitement, let it be added, that at this time the original motives of human actions had lost their influence; that the love of praise was extinct; the fear of infamy was become ridiculous; and the only wish of an *Englishman* was, to win his *wager.*

N°. 7. SATURDAY, MAY 27, 175

ONE of the principal amusements of th
is to read the works of those minute histori
writers of news, who, though contemptuousl
looked by the composers of bulky volum
yet necessary in a nation where much wea
duces much leisure, and one part of the pe
nothing to do but to observe the lives and f
of the other.

To us, who are regaled every morning an
ing with intelligence, and are supplied from
day with materials for conversation, it is dif
conceive how man can subsist without a new
or to what entertainment companies can a
in those wide regions of the earth that have
Chronicles nor *Magazines*, neither *Gazettes* no
tisers, neither *Journals* nor *Evening-Posts*.

There are never great numbers in any
whose reason or invention can find employ
their tongues, who can raise a pleasing d
from their own stock of sentiments and imag
those few who have qualified themselves b
lation for general disquisitions are soon left
an audience. The common talk of men mu
to facts in which the talkers have, or think th
an interest; and where such facts cannot be
the pleasures of society will be merely sensual
the natives of the *Mahometan* empires, who a
most nearly to *European* civility, have no higl
sure at their convivial assemblies than to hea

or gaze upon a tumbler, and no company can keep together longer than they are diverted by sounds or shows.

All foreigners remark, that the knowledge of the common people of *England* is greater than that of any other vulgar. This superiority we undoubtedly owe to the rivulets of intelligence which are continually trickling among us, which every one may catch, and of which every one partakes.

This universal diffusion of instruction is, perhaps, not wholly without its inconveniences; it certainly fills the nation with superficial disputants; enables those to talk who were born to work; and affords information sufficient to elate vanity, and stiffen obstinacy, but too little to enlarge the mind into complete skill for full comprehension.

Whatever is found to gratify the public will be multiplied, by the emulation of venders, beyond necessity or use. This plenty, indeed, produces cheapness, but cheapness always ends in negligence and depravation.

The compilation of news-papers is often committed to narrow and mercenary minds, not qualified for the task of delighting or instructing; who are content to fill their paper, with whatever matter, without industry to gather, or discernment to select.

Thus journals are daily multiplied without increase of knowledge. The tale of the morning paper is told again in the evening, and the narratives of the evening are bought again in the morning. These repetitions, indeed, waste time, but they do not shorten it. The most eager peruser of news is tired before he has completed his labour; and many a man, who enters the coffee-house in his night-gown and slippers, is called away to his shop, or his dinner, *before he has well considered* the state of Europe.

It is discovered by Reaumur, that spiders might

make silk, if they could be persuaded to liv peace together. The writers of news, if they c be confederated, might give more pleasure to public. The morning and evening authers m divide an event between them; a single action, that not of much importance, might be gradually covered, so as to vary a whole week with joy, anx and conjecture.

We know that a *French* ship of war was l taken by a ship of *England;* but this event was fered to burst upon us all at once, and then wha knew already was echoed from day to day, and week to week.

Let us suppose these spiders of literature to together, and inquire to what an extensive web another event might be regularly drawn, and hov morning and six evening writers might agree to r their articles.

On *Monday Morning* the captain of a ship n arrive, who left the *Friseur* of *France,* and the *dog,* captain *Grim,* in sight of one another, so th engagement seemed unavoidable.

Monday Evening. A sound of cannon was h off *Cape Finisterre,* supposed to be those of the *dog* and *Friseur.*

Tuesday Morning. It was this morning repo that the *Bull-dog* engaged the *Friseur,* yard-arm yard-arm, three glasses and a half, but was oblig sheer off for want of powder. It is hoped tha quiry will be made into this affair in a proper pl

Tuesday Evening. The account of the engage between the *Bull-dog* and *Friseur* was premature

Wednesday Morning. Another express is arr which brings news, that the *Friseur* had lost al masts, and three hundred of her men, in the lat *gagement;* and that captain Grim is come into *bour* much shattered.

Wednesday Evening. We hear that the brave captain *Grim*, having expended his powder, proposed to enter the *Friseur* sword in hand; but that his lieutenant, the nephew of a certain nobleman, remonstrated against it.

Thursday Morning. We wait impatiently for a full account of the late engagement between the *Bull-dog* and *Friseur*.

Thursday Evening. It is said the order of the *Bath* will be sent to captain *Grim*.

Friday Morning. A certain Lord of the Admiralty has been heard to say of a certain captain, that if he had done his duty, a certain *French* ship might have been taken. It was not thus that merit was rewarded in the days of *Cromwell*.

Friday Evening. There is certain information at the Admiralty, that the *Friseur* is taken, after a resistance of two hours.

Saturday Morning. A letter from one of the gunners of the *Bull-dog*, mentions the taking of the *Friseur*, and attributes their success wholly to the bravery and resolution of captain *Grim*, who never owed any of his advancement to borough-jobbers, or any other corrupters of the people.

Saturday Evening. Captain *Grim* arrived at the Admiralty, with an account that he engaged the *Friseur*, a ship of equal force with his own, off *Cape Finisterre*, and took her, after an obstinate resistance, having killed one hundred and fifty of the *French*, with the loss of ninety-five of his own men.

N°. 8. SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

In the time of public danger, it is every man's duty to withdraw his thoughts in some measure from his private interest, and employ part of his time for the general welfare. National conduct ought to be the result of national wisdom, a plan formed by mature consideration and diligent selection out of all the schemes which may be offered, and all the information which can be procured.

In a battle, every man should fight as if he was the single champion; in preparations for war, every man should think, as if the last event depended on his counsel. None can tell what discoveries are within his reach, or how much he may contribute to the public safety.

Full of these considerations, I have carefully reviewed the process of the war, and find, what every other man has found, that we have hitherto added nothing to our military reputation: that at one time we have been beaten by enemies whom we did not see; and, at another, have avoided the sight of enemies lest we should be beaten.

Whether our troops are defective in discipline or *in courage, is* not very useful to inquire; they *evidently want* something necessary to success; and he

that shall supply that want will deserve well of his country.

To learn of an enemy has always been accounted politic and honourable; and, therefore, I hope it will raise no prejudice against my project, to confess that I borrowed it from a *Frenchman.*

When the Isle of *Rhodes* was, many centuries ago, in the hands of that military order now called the *Knights of Malta,* it was ravaged by a dragon, who inhabited a den under a rock, from which he issued forth when he was hungry or wanton, and without fear or mercy devoured men and beasts as they came in his way. Many councils were held, and many devices offered, for his destruction; but as his back was armed with impenetrable scales, none would venture to attack him. At last *Dudon,* a *French* knight, undertook the deliverance of the island. From some place of security he took a view of the dragon, or, as a modern soldier would say, *reconnoitred* him; and observed that his belly was naked and vulnerable. He then returned home to take his *arrangements*; and, by a very exact imitation of nature, made a dragon of pasteboard, in the belly of which he put beef and mutton, and accustomed two sturdy mastiffs to feed themselves by tearing their way to the concealed flesh. When his dogs were well practised in this method of plunder, he marched out with them at his heels, and showed them the dragon; they rushed upon him in quest of their dinner; *Dudon* battered his skull, while they lacerated his belly; and neither his sting nor claws were able to defend him.

Something like this might be practised in our present state, Let a fortification be raised on *Salisbury-Plain,* resembling *Brest,* or *Toulon,* or *Paris* itself, with all the *usual* preparations for defence: let the

inclosure be filled with beef and ale; let the soldiers, from some proper eminence, see shirts waving upon lines, and here and there a plump landlady hurrying about with pots in her hands. When they are sufficiently animated to advance, lead them in exact order, with fife and drum, to that side whence the wind blows, till they come within the scent of roast meat and tobacco. Contrive that they may approach the place fasting, about half an hour after dinner-time, assure them that there is no danger, and command an attack.

If nobody within either moves or speaks, it is not unlikely that they may carry the place by storm; but if a panic should seize them, it will be proper to defer the enterprise to a more hungry hour. When they have entered, let them fill their bellies and return to the camp.

On the next day let the same place be shown them again, but with some additions of strength or terror. I cannot pretend to inform our generals through what gradations of danger they should train their men to fortitude. They best know what the soldiers and what themselves can bear. It will be proper that the war should every day vary its appearance. Sometimes, as they mount the rampart, a cook may throw fat upon the fire, to accustom them to a sudden blaze; and sometimes, by the clatter of empty pots, they may be inured to formidable noises. But let it never be forgotten, that victory must repose with a full belly.

In time it will be proper to bring our *French* prisoners from the coast, and place them upon the walls in martial order. At their first appearance their hands must be tied, but they may be allowed to grin. *In a month* they may guard the place with their hands *loosed, provided* that on pain of death they be forbidden to strike.

By this method our army will soon be brought to look an enemy in the face. But it has been lately observed, that fear is received by the ear as well as the eyes; and the *Indian* war-cry is represented as too dreadful to be endured; as a sound that will force the bravest veteran to drop his weapon, and desert his rank; that will deafen his ear, and chill his breast; that will neither suffer him to hear orders or to feel shame, or retain any sensibility but the dread of death.

That the savage clamours of naked barbarians should thus terrify troops disciplined to war, and ranged in array with arms in their hands, is surely strange. But this is no time to reason. I am of opinion, that by a proper mixture of asses, bulls, turkeys, geese, and tragedians, a noise might be procured equally horrid with the war-cry. When our men have been encouraged by frequent victories, nothing will remain but to qualify them for extreme danger, by a sudden concert of terrific vociferation. When they have endured this last trial, let them be led to action, as men who are no longer to be frightened; as men who can bear at once the grimaces of the *Gauls*, and the howl of the *Americans*.

N°. 9. SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I HAVE read you; that is a favour few authers can boast of having received from me besides yourself. My intention in telling you of it is to inform you, that you have both pleased and angered me. Never did writer appear so delightful to me as you did when you adopted the name of the *Idler*. But what a falling-off was there when your first production was brought to light! A natural irresistible attachment to that favourable passion, *idling*, had led me to hope for indulgence from the *Idler*, but I find him a stranger to the title.

What rules has he proposed totally to unbrace the slackened nerve; to shade the heavy eye of inattention; to give the smooth feature and the uncontracted muscle; or procure insensibility to the whole animal composition?

These were some of the placid blessings I promised myself the enjoyment of, when I committed violence upon myself by mustering up all my strength to set about reading you; but I am disappointed in them all, and the stroke of eleven in the morning is still as terrible to me as before, and I find putting on my clothes still as painful and laborious. Oh that our climate would permit that original nakedness which

the thrice happy *Indians* to this day enjoy! How many unsolicitous hours should I bask away, warmed in bed by the sun's glorious beams, could I, like them, tumble from thence in a moment, when necessity obliges me to endure the torment of getting upon my legs.

But wherefore do I talk to you upon subjects of this delicate nature? you who seem ignorant of the inexpressible charms of the elbow-chair, attended with a soft stool for the elevation of the feet! Thus, vacant of thought, do I indulge the live-long day.

You may define happiness as you please; I embrace that opinion which makes it consist in the absence of pain. To reflect is pain; to stir is pain; therefore I never reflect or stir but when I cannot help it. Perhaps you will call my scheme of life indolence, and therefore think the *Idler* excused from taking any notice of me: but I have always looked upon indolence and idleness as the same; and so desire you will now and then, while you profess yourself of our fraternity, take some notice of me, and others in my situation, who think they have a right to your assistance; or relinquish the name.

You may publish, burn, or destroy this, just as you are in the humour; it is ten to one but I forget that I wrote it before it reaches you. I believe you may find a motto for it in Horace, but I cannot reach him without getting out of my chair; that is a sufficient reason for my not affixing any.—And being obliged to sit upright to ring the bell for my servant to convey this to the penny-post, if I slip the opportunity of his being now in the room, makes me break off abruptly.

This correspondent, whoever he be, is not to be dismissed without some tokens of regard. There is no mark more certain of a genuine *Idler*, than

uneasiness without molestation, and complaint without a grievance.

Yet my gratitude to the contributor of half a paper shall not wholly overpower my sincerity. I must inform you, that, with all his pretensions, he that calls for directions to be idle, is yet but in the rudiments of idleness, and has attained neither the practice nor theory of wasting life. The true nature of idleness he will know in time, by continuing to be idle. *Virgil* tells us of an impetuous and rapid being, that acquires strength by motion. The *Idler* acquires weight by lying still.

The *vis inertæ*, the quality of resisting all external impulse, is hourly increasing; the restless and troublesome faculties of attention and distinction, reflection on the past, and solicitude for the future, by a long indulgence of idleness, will, like tapers in unelastic air, be gradually extinguished; and the officious lover, the vigilant soldier, the busy trader, may, by a judicious composure of his mind, sink into a state approaching to that of brute matter; in which he shall retain the consciousness of his own existence, only by an obtuse languor and drowsy discontent.

This is the lowest stage to which the favourites of idleness can descend; these regions of undelighted quiet can be entered by few. Of those that are prepared to sink down into their shade, some are roused into action by avarice or ambition, some are awakened by the voice of fame, some allured by the smile of beauty, and many withheld by the importunities of want. Of all the enemies of idleness, want is the most formidable. Fame is soon found to be a sound, and love a dream; avarice and ambition may be justly suspected of privy confederacies with idleness; for when they have for a while protected their votaries, they often deliver them up to end their lives

under her dominion. Want always struggles against idleness, but Want herself is often overcome; and every hour shows the careful observer those who had rather live in ease than in plenty.

So wide is the region of Idleness, and so powerful her influence. But she does not immediately confer all her gifts. My correspondent, who seems, with all his errors, worthy of advice, must be told, that he is calling too hastily for the last effusion of total insensibility. Whatever he may have been taught by unskilful *Idlers* to believe, labour is necessary in his initiation to idleness. He that never labours may know the pains of idleness, but not the pleasure. The comfort is, that if he devotes himself to insensibility, he will daily lengthen the intervals of idleness, and shorten those of labour, till at last he will lie down to rest, and no longer disturb the world or himself by bustle or competition.

Thus I have endeavoured to give him that information which, perhaps, after all, he did not want; for a true *Idler* often calls for that which he knows is never to be had, and asks questions which he does not desire ever to be answered.

N°. 10. SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 1758.

CREDULITY, or confidence of opinion too great for the evidence from which opinion is derived, we find to be a general weakness imputed by every sect and party to all others; and, indeed, by every man to every other man.

Of all kinds of credulity, the most obstinate and wonderful is that of political zealots; of men, who being numbered, they know not how or why, in any of the parties that divide a state, resign the use of their own eyes and ears, and resolve to believe nothing that does not favour those whom they profess to follow.

The bigot of philosophy is seduced by authorities which he has not always opportunities to examine, is entangled in systems by which truth and falsehood are inextricably complicated, or undertakes to talk on subjects which nature did not form him able to comprehend.

The Cartesian, who denies that his horse feels the spur, or that the hare is afraid when the hounds approach her; the disciple of *Malbranche*, who maintains that the man was not hurt by the bullet, which, according to vulgar apprehension, swept away his legs; the follower of *Berkeley*, who, while he sits writing at his table, declares that he has neither table, paper, nor fingers; have all the honour at least of being deceived by fallacies not easily detected, and may plead that they did not forsake truth, but for appearances which they were not able to distinguish from it.

But the man who engages in a party has seldom to do with any thing remote or abstruse. The present state of things is before his eyes; and, if he cannot be satisfied without retrospection, yet he seldom extends his views beyond the historical events of the last century. All the knowledge that he can want is within his attainment, and most of the arguments which he can hear are within his capacity.

Yet so it is that an *Idler* meets every hour of his life with men who have different opinions upon every thing past, present, and future; who deny the most notorious facts, contradict the most cogent

truths, and persist in asserting to-day what they asserted yesterday, in defiance of evidence, and contempt of confutation.

Two of my companions, who are grown old in idleness, are *Tom Tempest* and *Jack Sneaker*. Both of them consider themselves as neglected by their parties, and therefore entitled to credit; for why should they favour ingratitude? They are both men of integrity, where no factious interest is to be promoted; and both lovers of truth, when they are not heated with political debate.

Tom Tempest is a steady friend to the house of *Stuart*. He can recount the prodigies that have appeared in the sky, and the calamities that have afflicted the nation every year from the Revolution; and is of opinion, that, if the exiled family had continued to reign, there would have neither been worms in our ships, nor caterpillars on our trees. He wonders that the nation was not awakened by the hard frost to a revocation of the true king, and is hourly afraid that the whole island will be lost in the sea. He believes that king *William* burned *Whitehall* that he might steal the furniture; and that *Tillotson* died an atheist. Of queen *Anne* he speaks with more tenderness, owns that she meant well, and can tell by whom and why she was poisoned. In the succeeding reigns all has been corruption, malice, and design. He believes that nothing ill has ever happened for these forty years by chance or error; he holds that the battle of *Dettingen* was won by mistake, and that of *Fontenoy* lost by contract; that the *Victory* was sunk by a private order; that *Cornhill* was fired by emissaries from the council; and the arch of *Westminster-bridge* was so contrived as to sink, on purpose that the nation might be put to charge. He considers the new road to *Islington* as an encroachment

on liberty, and often asserts that *broad wheels* will be the ruin of *England*.

Tom is generally vehement and noisy, but nevertheless has some secrets which he always communicates in a whisper. Many and many a time has *Tom* told me, in a corner, that our miseries were almost at an end, and that we should see, in a month, another monarch on the throne; the time elapses without a revolution; *Tom* meets me again with new intelligence, the whole scheme is now settled, and we shall see great events in another month.

Jack Sneaker is a hearty adherent to the present establishment; he has known those who saw the bed into which the Pretender was conveyed in a warming-pan. He often rejoices that the nation was not enslaved by the *Irish*. He believes that king *William* never lost a battle, and that if he had lived one year longer he would have conquered *France*. He holds that *Charles* the first was a Papist. He allows there were some good men in the reign of queen *Anne*, but the peace of *Utrecht* brought a blast upon the nation, and has been the cause of all the evil that we have suffered to the present hour. He believes that the scheme of the *South Sea* was well intended, but that it miscarried by the influence of *France*. He considers a standing army as the bulwark of liberty; thinks us secured from corruption by septennial parliaments; relates how we are enriched and strengthened by the electoral dominions, and declares that the public debt is a blessing to the nation.

Yet, amidst all this prosperity, poor *Jack* is hourly disturbed by the dread of Popery. He wonders that some stricter laws are not made against Papists, and is sometimes afraid that they are busy with *French* gold among the bishops and judges.

He cannot believe that the Nonjurors are so quiet *for nothing*, they must certainly be forming some

plot for the establishment of Popery; he does not think the present oaths sufficiently binding, and wishes that some better security could be found for the succession of *Hanover*. He is zealous for the naturalization of foreign Protestants, and rejoiced at the admission of the *Jews* to the *English* privileges, because he thought a *Jew* would never be a Papist.

N°. 11. SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 1758.

IT is commonly observed, that when two *Englishmen* meet, their first talk is of the weather; they are in haste to tell each other, what each must already know, that it is hot or cold, bright or cloudy, windy or calm.

There are, among the numerous lovers of subtilties and paradoxes, some who derive the civil institutions of every country from its climate, who impute freedom and slavery to the temperature of the air, can fix the meridian of vice and virtue, and tell at what degree of latitude we are to expect courage or timidity, knowledge or ignorance.

From these dreams of idle speculation, a slight survey of life, and a little knowledge of history, is sufficient to awaken any inquirer, whose ambition of distinction has not overpowered his love of truth. Forms of government are seldom the result of much deliberation; they are framed by chance in popular assemblies, or in conquered countries by despotic *authority*. *Laws* are often occasional, often capri-

cious, made always by a few, and sometimes by a single voice. Nations have changed their characters; slavery is now no where more patiently endured, than in countries once inhabited by the zealots of liberty.

But national customs can arise only from general agreement; they are not imposed but chosen, and are continued only by the continuance of their cause. An *Englishman*'s notice of the weather, is the natural consequence of changeable skies and uncertain seasons. In many parts of the world, wet weather and dry are regularly expected at certain periods; but in our island every man goes to sleep, unable to guess whether he shall behold in the morning a bright or cloudy atmosphere, whether his rest shall be lulled by a shower, or broken by a tempest. We therefore rejoice mutually at good weather, as at an escape from something that we feared; and mutually complain of bad, as of the loss of something that we hoped.

Such is the reason of our practice; and who shall treat it with contempt? Surely not the attendant on a court, whose business is to watch the looks of a being weak and foolish as himself, and whose vanity is to recount the names of men who might drop into nothing, and leave no vacuity; nor the proprietor of funds, who stops his acquaintance in the street to tell him of the loss of half-a-crown; nor the inquirer after news, who fills his head with foreign events, and talks of skirmishes and sieges, of which no consequence will ever reach his hearers or himself. The weather is a nobler and more interesting subject; it is the present state of the skies and of the earth, on which plenty and famine are suspended, on which millions depend for the necessaries of life.

The weather is frequently mentioned for another reason, less honourable to my dear countrymen.

Our dispositions too frequently change with the colour of the sky; and when we find ourselves cheerful and good-natured, we naturally pay our acknowledgments to the powers of sunshine; or, if we sink into dulness and pevishness, look round the horizon for an excuse, and charge our discontent upon an easterly wind or a cloudy day.

Surely nothing is more reproachful to a being endowed with reason, than to resign its powers to the influence of the air, and live in dependence on the weather and the wind, for the only blessings which nature has put into our power, tranquillity and benevolence. To look up to the sky for the nutriment of our bodies, is the condition of nature; to call upon the sun for peace and gaiety, or deprecate the clouds lest sorrow should overwhelm us, is the cowardice of idleness, and the idolatry of folly.

Yet, even in this age of inquiry and knowledge, when superstition is driven away, and omens and prodigies have lost their terrors, we find this folly countenanced by frequent examples. Those that laugh at the portentous glare of a comet, and hear a crow with equal tranquillity from the right or left, will yet talk of times and situations proper for intellectual performances, will imagine the fancy exalted by vernal breezes, and the reason invigorated by a bright calm.

If men who have given up themselves to fanciful credulity, would confine their conceits in their own minds, they might regulate their lives by the barometer, with inconvenience only to themselves; but to fill the world with accounts of intellects subject to ebb and flow, of one genius that awakened in the spring, and another that ripened in the autumn, of one mind expanded in the summer, and of another concentrated in the winter, is no less dangerous than

to tell children of bugbears and goblins. Fear will find every house haunted; and idleness will wait for ever for the moment of illumination.

This distinction of seasons is produced only by imagination operating on luxury. To temperance every day is bright, and every hour is propitious to diligence. He that shall resolutely excite his faculties, or exert his virtues, will soon make himself superior to the seasons, and may set at defiance the morning mist, and the evening damp, the blasts of the east, and the clouds of the south.

It was the boast of the *Stoic* philosophy, to make man unshaken by calamity, and unelated by success; incorruptible by pleasure, and invulnerable by pain; these are heights of wisdom which none ever attained, and to which few can aspire; but there are lower degrees of constancy necessary to common virtue; and every man, however he may distrust himself in the extremes of good or evil, might at least struggle against the tyranny of the climate, and refuse to enslave his virtue or his reason to the most variable of all variations, the changes of the weather.

N°. 12. SATURDAY, JULY 1, 1758.

That every man is important in his own eyes, is a position of which we all either voluntarily or unwarily, at least once an hour confess the truth; and it will unavoidably follow, that every man believes *himself* important to the public.

The right which this importance gives us to general

notice and visible distinction, is one of those disputable privileges which we have not always courage to assert, and which we, therefore, suffer to lie dormant till some elation of mind, or vicissitude of fortune, incites us to declare our pretensions, and enforce our demands. And hopeless as the claim of vulgar characters may seem to the supercilious and severe, there are few who do not at one time or other endeavour to step forward beyond their rank, who do not make some struggles for fame, and show that they think all other conveniences and delights imperfectly enjoyed without a name.

To get a name can happen but to few. A name, even in the most commercial nation, is one of the few things which cannot be bought. It is the free gift of mankind, which must be deserved before it will be granted, and is at last unwillingly bestowed. But this unwillingness only increases desire in him who believes his merit sufficient to overcome it.

There is a particular period of life in which this fondness for a name seems principally to predominate in both sexes. Scarce any couple comes together but the nuptials are declared in the newspapers with encomiums on each party. Many an eye, ranging over the page with eager curiosity in quest of statesmen and heroes, is stopped by a marriage celebrated between Mr. *Buckram*, an eminent salesman in *Threadneedle-street*, and Miss *Dolly Juniper*, the only daughter of an eminent distiller, of the parish of *St. Giles's in the Fields*, a young lady adorned with every accomplishment that can give happiness to the married state. Or we are told, amidst our impatience for the event of a battle, that on a certain day Mr. *Winker*, a tide-waiter at *Yarmouth*, was married to Mrs. *Cackle*, a widow lady of great accomplishments; and that as soon as the ceremony was

performed they set out in a post-chaise for *Yarmouth*.

Many are the inquiries which such intelligence must undoubtedly raise, but nothing in this world is lasting. When the reader has contemplated with envy, or with gladness, the felicity of Mr. *Buckram* and Mr. *Hinker*, and ransacked his memory for the names of *Jumper* and *Cackle*, his attention is diverted to other thoughts, by finding that *Eliza* will not cover this season; or that a spaniel has been lost or stolen, that answers to the name of *Ranger*.

Whence it arises that on the day of marriage all agree to call thus openly for honours, I am not able to discover. Some, perhaps, think it kind, by a public declaration, to put an end to the hopes of rivalry and the fears of jealousy, to let parents know that they may set their daughters at liberty whom they have locked up for fear of the bridegroom, or to dismiss to their counters and their offices the amorous youths that had been used to hover round the dwelling of the bride.

These connubial proices may have another cause. It may be the intention of the husband and wife to dignify themselves in the eyes of each other, and, according to their different tempers or expectations, to win affection, or enforce respect.

It was said of the family of *Lucas* that it was *noble*, for *all the brothers were valiant, and all the sisters were virtuous*. What would a stranger say of the *English* nation, in which, on the day of marriage, all the men are *eminent* and all the women *beautiful*, *accomplished*, and *rich*?

How long the wife will be persuaded of the eminence of her husband, or the husband continue to believe that his wife has the qualities required to make marriage happy, may reasonably be questioned. *I am afraid* that much time seldom passes before

each is convinced that praises are fallacious, and particularly those praises which we confer upon ourselves.

I should, therefore, think that this custom might be omitted without any loss to the community; and that the sons and daughters of lanes and alleys might go hereafter to the next church, with no witnesses of their worth or happiness but their parents and their friends; but if they cannot be happy on their bridal day without some gratification of their vanity, I hope they will be willing to encourage a friend of mine who proposes to devote his powers to their service.

Mr. *Settle*, a man whose *eminence* was once allowed by the *eminent*, and whose *accomplishments* were confessed by the *accomplished*, in the latter part of a long life supported himself by an uncommon expedient. He had a standing elegy and epithalamium, of which only the first and last were leaves varied occasionally, and the intermediate pages were, by general terms, left applicable alike to every character. When any marriage became known, *Settle* ran to the bridegroom with his epithalamium; and when he heard of any death, ran to the heir with his elegy.

Who can think himself disgraced by a trade that was practised so long by the rival of *Dryden*, by the poet whose *Empress of Morocco* was played before princes by ladies of the court?

My friend purposes to open an office in the *Fleet* for matrimonial panegyrics, and will accommodate all with praise who think their own powers of expression inadequate to their merit. He will sell any man or woman the virtue or qualification which is most fashionable or most desired; but desires his customers to remember, that he sets beauty at the highest price, and riches at the next; and, if he be well paid, throws in virtue for nothing.

N°. 13. SATURDAY, JULY 8, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

DEAR MR. IDLER,

THOUGH few men of prudence are much inclined to interpose in disputes between man and wife, who commonly make peace at the expense of the arbitrator, yet I will venture to lay before you a controversy, by which the quiet of my house has been long disturbed, and which, unless you can decide it, is likely to produce lasting evils, and embitter those hours which nature seems to have appropriated to tenderness and repose.

I married a wife with no great fortune, but of a family remarkable for domestic prudence, and elegant frugality. I lived with her at ease, if not with happiness, and seldom had any reason of complaint. The house was always clean, the servants very active and regular, dinner was on the table every day at the same minute, and the ladies of the neighbourhood were frightened when I invited their husbands, lest their own economy should be less esteemed.

During this gentle lapse of life my dear brought me three daughters. I wished for a son, to continue the family; but my wife often tells me, that boys are dirty things, and are always troublesome in a house; *and declares that* she has hated the sight of them ever

since she saw lady *Fondle*'s eldest son ride over a carpet with his hobby-horse all mire.

I did not much attend to her opinion, but knew that girls could not be made boys; and therefore composed myself to bear what I could not remedy, and resolved to bestow that care on my daughters to which only the sons are commonly thought entitled.

But my wife's notions of education differ widely from mine. She is an irreconcileable enemy to idleness, and considers every state of life as idleness, in which the hands are not employed, or some art acquired, by which she thinks money may be got or saved.

In pursuance of this principle, she calls up her daughters at a certain hour, and appoints them a task of needlework to be performed before breakfast. They are confined in a garret, which has its window in the roof, both because work is best done at a skylight, and because children are apt to lose time by looking about them.

They bring down their work to breakfast, and as they deserve are commended or reproved; they are then sent up with a new task till dinner; if no company is expected, their mother sits with them the whole afternoon, to direct their operations, and to draw patterns, and is sometimes denied to her nearest relations, when she is engaged in teaching them a new stitch.

By this continual exercise of their diligence, she has obtained a very considerable number of laborious performances. We have twice as many fire-skreens as chimnies, and three flourished quilts for every bed. Half the rooms are adorned with a kind of *sutile pictures*, which imitate tapestry. But all their work is *not set out to* show; she has boxes filled with *knit garters and* braided shoes. She has twenty

covers for side-saddles embroidered with silver flowers, and has curtains wrought with gold in various figures, which she resolves some time or other to hang up. All these she displays to her company whenever she is elate with merit, and eager for praise; and amidst the praises which her friends and herself bestow upon her merit, she never fails to turn to me, and ask what all these would cost, if I had been to buy them.

I sometimes venture to tell her that many of the ornaments are superfluous; that what is done with so much labour might have been supplied by a very easy purchase; that the work is not always worth the materials; and that I know not why the children should be prosecuted with useless tasks, or obliged to make shoes that are never worn. She answers with a look of contempt, that men never care how money goes, and proceeds to tell of a dozen new chairs for which she is contriving covers, and of a couch which she intends to stand as a monument of needle-work.

In the mean time the girls grow up in total ignorance of every thing past, present, and future. *Molly* asked me the other day, whether *Ireland* was in *France*, and was ordered by her mother to mend her hem. *Kitty* knows not, at sixteen, the difference between a Protestant and a Papist, because she has been employed three years in filling a side of a closet with a hanging that is to represent *Cranmer* in the flames. And *Dolly*, my eldest girl, is now unable to read a chapter in the Bible, having spent all the time, which other children pass at school, in working the interview between *Solomon* and the queen of *Sheba*.

About a month ago *Tent* and *Turkey*-stitch seemed at a stand; my wife knew not what new work to introduce; I ventured to propose that the girls should now learn to read and write, and mentioned the

necessity of a little arithmetic; but, unhappily, my wife has discovered that linen wears out, and has bought the girls three little wheels, that they may spin huckaback, for the servants table. I remonstrated, that with larger wheels they might dispatch in an hour what must now cost them a day; but she told me, with irresistable authority, that any business is better than idleness; that when these wheels are set upon a table, and mats under them, they will turn without noise, and keep the girls upright; that great wheels are not fit for gentlewomen; and that with these, small as they are, she does not doubt but that the three girls, if they are kept close, will spin every year as much cloth as would cost five pounds if one were to buy it.

N°. 14. SATURDAY, JULY 15, 1758.

When *Diogenes* received a visit in his tub from *Alexander the Great*, and was asked, according to the ancient forms of royal courtesy, what petition he had to offer; *I have nothing*, said he, *to ask, but that you would remove to the other side, that you may not, by intercepting the sunshine, take from me what you cannot give.*

Such was the demand of *Diogenes* from the greatest monarch of the earth, which those, who have less power than *Alexander*, may, with yet more propriety, apply to themselves. He that does much good, may be allowed to do sometimes a little harm. But if the opportunities of beneficence be denied by

fortune, innocence should at least be vigilantly preserved.

It is well known, that time once past never returns: and that the moment which is lost, is lost for ever. Time, therefore, ought, above all other kinds of property, to be free from invasion; and yet there is no man who does not claim the power of wasting that time which is the right of others.

This usurpation is so general, that a very small part of the year is spent by choice; scarcely any thing is done when it is intended, or obtained when it is desired. Life is continually ravaged by invaders; one steals away an hour, and another a day: one conceals the robbery by hurrying us into business, another by lulling us with amusement; the depredation is continued through a thousand vicissitudes of tumult and tranquillity, till, having lost all, we can lose no more.

This waste of the lives of men has been very frequently charged upon the Great, whose followers linger from year to year in expectations, and die at last with petitions in their hands. Those who raise envy will easily incur censure. I know not whether statesmen and patrons do not suffer more reproaches than they deserve, and may not rather themselves complain, that they are given up a prey to pretensions without merit, and to importunity without shame.

The truth is, that the inconveniencies of attendance are more lamented than felt. To the greater number solicitation is its own reward. To be seen in good company, to talk of familiarities with men of power, to be able to tell the freshest news, to gratify an inferior circle with predictions of increase or decline of favour, and to be regarded as a candidate for high offices, are compensations more than equivalent to the delay of favours, which, perhaps,

he that begs them has hardly confidence to expect.

A man, conspicuous in a high station, who multiplies hopes that he may multiply dependants, may be considered as a beast of prey, justly dreaded, but easily avoided; his den is known, and they who would not be devoured, need not approach it. The great danger of the waste of time is from caterpillars and moths, who are not resisted, because they are not feared, and who work on with unheeded mischiefs, and invisible encroachments.

He whose rank or merit procures him the notice of mankind, must give up himself, in a great measure, to the convenience or humour of those who surround him. Every man who is sick of himself will fly to him for relief; he that wants to speak will require him to hear; and he that wants to hear will expect him to speak. Hour passes after hour, the noon succeeds to morning, and the evening to noon, while a thousand objects are forced upon his attention, which he rejects as fast as they are offered, but which the custom of the world requires to be received with appearance of regard.

If we will have the kindness of others, we must endure their follies. He who cannot persuade himself to withdraw from society, must be content to pay a tribute of his time to a multitude of tyrants; to the loiterer, who makes appointments which he never keeps; to the consulter, who asks advice which he never takes; to the boaster, who blusters only to be praised; to the complainer, who whines only to be pitied; to the projector, whose happiness is to entertain his friends with expectations which all but himself know to be vain; to the economist, who tells of bargains and settlements; to the politician, who predicts the fate of battles and breach

of alliances; to the usurer, who compares the different funds; and to the talker, who talks only because he loves to be talking.

To put every man in possession of his own time, and rescue the day from the succession of usurpers, is beyond my power, and beyond my hope. Yet, perhaps, some stop might be put to this unmerciful persecution, if all would seriously reflect, that whoever pays a visit that is not desired, or talks longer than the hearer is willing to attend, is guilty of an injury which he cannot repair, and takes away that which he cannot give.

N°. 15. SATURDAY, JULY 22, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I HAVE the misfortune to be a man of business; that, you will say, is a most grievous one; but what makes it the more so to me, is, that my wife has nothing to do: at least she had too good an education, and the prospect of too good a fortune in reversion when I married her, to think of employing herself either in my shop-affairs, or the management of my family.

Her time, you know, as well as my own, must be filled up some way or other. For my part, I have enough to mind in weighing my goods out, and

aiting on my customers: but my wife, though ıe could be of as much use as a shopman to me, if ıe would put her hand to it, is now only in my ay. She walks all the morning sauntering about ıe shop, with her arms through her pocket-holes, r stands gaping at the door-sill, and looking at very person that passes by. She is continually asking ıe a thousand frivolous questions about every cus-)mer that comes in and goes out; and all the while ıat I am entering any thing in my day-book, she is)lling over the counter, and staring at it, as if I was nly scribbling or drawing figures for her amusement. ometimes, indeed, she will take a needle: but as she lways works at the door, or in the middle of the ıop, she has so many interruptions, that she is longer emming a towel, or darning a stocking, than I am ı breaking forty loaves of sugar, and making it up ıto pounds.

In the afternoon I am sure, likewise, to have her ompany, except she is called upon by some of her cquaintance: and then, as we let out all the upper art of our house, and have only a little room ackwards for ourselves, they either keep such a hattering, or else are calling out every moment to ıe, that I cannot mind my business for them.

My wife, I am sure, might do all the little mat-ers our family requires; and I could wish that she 'ould employ herself in them; but, instead of that, 'e have a girl to do the work, and look after a ttle boy about two years old, which I may fairly ıy is the mother's own child. The brat must be umoured in every thing: he is, therefore, suffered onstantly to play in the shop, pull all the goods bout, and clamber up the shelves to get at the lumbs and sugar. I dare not correct him; be-ause, if I did, I should have wife and maid both

upon me at once. As to the latter, she is as lazy and sluttish as her mistress; and because she complains she has too much work, we can scarcely get her to do any thing at all: nay, what is worse than that, I am afraid she is hardly honest; and as she is entrusted to buy in all our provisions, the jade, I am sure, makes a market-penny out of every article.

But to return to my deary.—The evenings are the only time, when it is fine weather, that I am left to myself; for then she generally takes the child out to give it milk in the park. When she comes home again, she is so fatigued with walking, that she cannot stir from her chair: and it is an hour, after shop is shut, before I can get a bit of supper, while the maid is taken up in undressing and putting the child to bed.

But you will pity me much more when I tell you the manner in which we generally pass our *Sundays*. In the morning she is commonly too ill to dress herself to go to church; she, therefore, never gets up till noon; and what is still more vexatious, keeps me in bed with her, when I ought to be busily engaged in better employment. It is well if she can get her things on by dinner-time; and when that is over, I am sure to be dragged out by her, either to *Georgia*, or *Hornsey Wood*, or the *White-Conduit House*. Yet even these near excursions are so very fatiguing to her, that, besides what it costs me in tea and hot rolls, and syllabubs, and cakes for the boy, I am frequently forced to take a hackney-coach, or drive them out in a one-horse chair. At other times, as my wife is rather of the fattest, and a very poor walker, besides bearing her whole weight upon my arm, I am obliged to carry the child myself.

Thus, Sir, does she constantly drawl out her time,

without either profit or satisfaction; and, while I see my neighbours' wives helping in the shop, and almost earning as much as their husbands, I have the mortification to find, that mine is nothing but a dead weight upon me. In short, I do not know any greater misfortune can happen to a plain hard-working tradesman, as I am, than to be joined to such a woman, who is rather a clog than an helpmate to him.

I am, SIR,

Your humble servant,

ZACHARY TREACLE.

N°. 16. SATURDAY, JULY 29, 1758.

I PAID a visit yesterday to my old friend *Ned Drugget*, at his country-lodgings. *Ned* began trade with a very small fortune; he took a small house in an obscure street, and for some years dealt only in remnants. Knowing that *light gains make a heavy purse*, he was content with moderate profit; having observed or heard the effects of civility, he bowed down to the counter-edge at the entrance and departure of every customer, listened without impatience to the objections of the ignorant, and refused without resentment the offers of the penurious. His only recreation was to stand at his own door and look into the street. His dinner was sent him from a neigh-

bouring alehouse, and he opened and shut the shop at a certain hour with his own hands.

His reputation soon extended from one end of the street to the other; and Mr. *Drugget*'s exemplary conduct was recommended by every master to his apprentice, and by every father to his son. *Ned* was not only considered as a thriving trader, but as a man of elegance and politeness, for he was remarkably neat in his dress, and would wear his coat threadbare without spotting it; his hat was always brushed, his shoes glossy, his wig nicely curled, and his stockings without a wrinkle. With such qualifications it was not very difficult for him to gain the heart of Miss *Comfit*, the only daughter of Mr. *Comfit* the confectioner.

Ned is one of those whose happiness marriage has increased. His wife had the same disposition with himself; and his method of life was very little changed, except that he dismissed the lodgers from the first floor, and took the whole house into his own hands.

He had already, by his parsimony, accumulated a considerable sum, to which the fortune of his wife was now added. From this time he began to grasp at greater acquisitions, and was always ready with money in his hand, to pick up the refuse of a sale, or to buy the stock of a trader who retired from business. He soon added his parlour to his shop, and was obliged, a few months afterwards, to hire a warehouse.

He had now a shop splendidly and copiously furnished with every thing that time had injured, or fashion had degraded, with fragments of tissues, odd yards of brocade, vast bales of faded silk, and innumerable boxes of antiquated ribbons. His shop was soon celebrated through all quarters of the town, and frequently by every form of ostentatious poverty. Every maid, whose misfortune it was to be taller than

her lady, matched her gown at Mr. *Drugget's*; and many a maiden, who had passed a winter with her aunt in *London*, dazzled the rustics, at her return, with cheap finery which *Drugget* had supplied. His shop was often visited in a morning by ladies who left their coaches in the next street, and crept through the ally in linen gowns. *Drugget* knows the rank of his customers by their bashfulness; and when he finds them unwilling to be seen, invites them up stairs, or retires with them to the back window.

I rejoiced at the increasing prosperity of my friend, and imagined, that, as he grew rich, he was growing happy. His mind has partaken the enlargement of his fortune. When I stepped in for the first five years, I was welcomed only with a shake of the hand; in the next period of his life, he beckoned across the way for a pot of beer; but for six years past, he invited me to dinner; and if he bespeaks me the day before, never fails to regale me with a fillet of veal.

His riches neither made him uncivil nor negligent; he rose at the same hour, attended with the same assiduity, and bowed with the same gentleness. But for some years he has been much inclined to talk of the fatigues of business, and the confinement of a shop, and to wish that he had been so happy as to have renewed his uncle's lease of a farm, that he might have lived without noise and hurry, in a pure air, in the artless society of honest villagers, and the contemplation of the works of nature.

I soon discovered the cause of my friend's philosophy. He thought himself grown rich enough to have a lodging in the country, like the mercers on *Ludgate-hill*, and was resolved to enjoy himself in the decline of life. This was a revolution not to be made suddenly. He talked three years of the plea-

sures of the country, but passed every night over his own shop. But at last he resolved to be happy, and hired a lodging in the country, that he may steal some hours in the week from business; for, says he, *when a man advances in life, he loves to entertain himself sometimes with his own thoughts.*

I was invited to this seat of quiet and contemplation among those whom Mr. *Drugget* considers as his most reputable friends, and desires to make the first witnesses of his elevation to the highest dignities of a shopkeeper. I found him at *Islington*, in a room which overlooked the high road, amusing himself with looking through the window, which the clouds of dust would not suffer him to open. He embraced me, told me I was welcome into the country, and asked me, if I did not feel myself refreshed. He then desired that dinner might be hastened, for fresh air always sharpened his appetite, and ordered me a toast and a glass of wine after my walk. He told me much of the pleasure he found in retirement, and wondered what had kept him so long out of the country. After dinner, company came in, and Mr. *Drugget* again repeated the praises of the country, recommended the pleasures of meditation, and told them, that he had been all the morning at the window, counting the carriages as they passed before him.

No. 17. SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 1758.

The rainy weather, which has continued the last month, is said to have given great disturbance to the inspectors of barometers. The oraculous glasses have deceived their votaries; shower has succeeded shower, though they predicted sun-shine and dry skies; and by fatal confidence in these fallacious promises, many coats have lost their gloss, and many curls been moistened to flaccidity.

This is one of the distresses to which mortals subject themselves by the pride of speculation. I had no part in this learned disappointment, who am content to credit my senses, and to believe that rain will fall when the air blackens, and that the weather will be dry when the sun is bright. My caution indeed does not always preserve me from a shower. To be wet, may happen to the genuine *Idler;* but to be wet in opposition to theory, can befal only the *Idler* that pretends to be busy. Of those that spin out life in trifles and die without a memorial, many flatter themselves with high opinions of their own importance, and imagine that they are every day adding some improvement to human life. To be idle and to be poor, have always been reproaches, and therefore every man endeavours, with his utmost care, to hide his poverty from others, and his *idleness* from himself.

Among those whom I never could persuade to rank themselves with *Idlers*, and who speak with indignation of my morning sleeps and nocturnal rambles, one passes the day in catching spiders, that he may

count their eyes with a microscope; another erects his head, and exhibits the dust of a marigold separated from the flower with a dexterity worthy of *Leeuwenhoeck* himself. Some turn the wheel of electricity; some suspend rings to a load-stone, and find that what they did yesterday they can do again today. Some register the changes of the wind, and die fully convinced that the wind is changeable.

There are men yet more profound, who have heard that two colourless liquors may produce a colour by union, and that two cold bodies will grow hot if they are mingled; they mingle them, and produce the effect expected, say it is strange, and mingle them again.

The *Idlers* that sport only with inanimate nature may claim some indulgence; if they are useless, they are still innocent: but there are others, whom I know not how to mention without more emotion than my love of quiet willingly admits. Among the inferior professors of medical knowledge, is a race of wretches, whose lives are only varied by varieties of cruelty; whose favourite amusement is to nail dogs to tables and open them alive; to try how long life may be continued in various degrees of mutilation, or with the excision or laceration of the vital parts; to examine whether burning-irons are felt more acutely by the bone or tendon; and whether the more lasting agonies are produced by poison forced into the mouth, or injected into the veins.

It is not without reluctance that I offend the sensibility of the tender mind with images like these. If such cruelties were not practised, it were to be desired that they should not be conceived; but, since they are published every day with ostentation, let me be allowed once to mention them, since I mention them with abhorrence.

Mead has invidiously remarked of *Woodward*, that

he gathered shells and stones, and would pass for a philosopher. With pretensions much less reasonable, the anatomical novice tears out the living bowels of an animal, and styles himself physician, prepares himself by familiar cruelty for that profession which he is to exercise upon the tender and the helpless, upon feeble bodies and broken minds, and by which he has opportunities to extend his arts of torture, and continue those experiments upon infancy and age, which he has hitherto tried upon cats and dogs,

What is alleged in defence of these hateful practices, every one knows; but the truth is, that by knives, fire, and poison, knowledge is not always sought, and is very seldom attained. The experiments that have been tried, are tried again; he that burned an animal with irons yesterday, will be willing to amuse himself with burning another to-morrow. I know not, that by living dissections any discovery has been made by which a single malady is more easily cured. And if the knowledge of physiology has been somewhat increased, he surely buys knowledge dear, who learns the use of the lacteals at the expense of his humanity. It is time that universal resentment should arise against these horrid operations, which tend to harden the heart, extinguish those sensations which give man confidence in man, and make the physician more dreadful than the gout or stone.

N°. 18. SATURDAY, AUGUST 12, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

It commonly happens to him who endeavours to obtain distinction by ridicule, or censure, that he teaches others to practice his own arts against himself; and that, after a short enjoyment of the applause paid to his sagacity, or of the mirth excited by his wit, he is doomed to suffer the same severities of scrutiny, to hear inquiry detecting his faults, and exaggeration sporting with his failings.

The natural discontent of inferiority will seldom fail to operate in some degree of malice against him who professes to superintend the conduct of others, especially if he seats himself uncalled in the chair of judicature, and exercises authority by his own commission.

You cannot, therefore, wonder that your observations on human folly, if they produce laughter at one time, awaken criticism at another; and that among the numbers whom you have taught to scoff at the retirement of *Drugget*, there is one who offers his apology.

The mistake of your old friend is by no means peculiar. The public pleasures of far the greater part of mankind are counterfeit. Very few carry their philosophy to places of diversion, or are very careful to analyse their enjoyments. The general condition of life is so full of misery, that we are glad

to catch delight without inquiring whence it comes, or by what power it is bestowed.

The mind is seldom quickened to very vigorous operations but by pain, or the dread of pain. We do not disturb ourselves with the detection of fallacies which do us no harm, nor willingly decline a pleasing effect to investigate its cause. He that is happy, by whatever means, desires nothing but the continuance of happiness, and is no more solicitous to distribute his sensations into their proper species, than the common gazer on the beauties of the spring to separate light into its original rays.

Pleasure is therefore seldom such as it appears to others, nor often such as we represent it to ourselves. Of the ladies that sparkle at a musical performance, a very small number has any quick sensibility of harmonious sounds. But every one that goes has her pleasure. She has the pleasure of wearing fine clothes, and of showing them, of outshining those whom she suspects to envy her; she has the pleasure of appearing among other ladies in a place whither the race of meaner mortals seldom intrudes, and of reflecting that, in the conversations of the next morning, her name will be mentioned among those that sat in the first row; she has the pleasure of returning courtesies, or refusing to return them, of receiving compliments with civility, or rejecting them with disdain. She has the pleasure of meeting some of her acquaintance, of guessing why the rest are absent, and of telling them that she saw the opera, on pretence of inquiring why they would miss it. She has the pleasure of being supposed to be pleased with a refined amusement, and of hoping to be numbered among the votresses of harmony. She has the pleasure of escaping for two hours the superiority of a sister, *or the controul* of a husband; and from all

these pleasures she concludes, that heavenly music is the balm of life.

All assemblies of gaiety are brought together by motives of the same kind. The theatre is not filled with those that know or regard the skill of the actor, nor the ball-room by those who dance, or attend to the dancers. To all places of general resort, where the standard of pleasure is erected, we run with equal eagerness, or appearance of eagerness, for very different reasons. One goes that he may say he has been there, another because he never misses. This man goes to try what he can find, and that to discover what others find. Whatever diversion is costly will be frequented by those who desire to be thought rich; and whatever has, by any accident, become fashionable, easily continues its reputation, because every one is ashamed of not partaking it.

To every place of entertainment we go with expectation and desire of being pleased; we meet others who are brought by the same motives; no one will be the first to own the disappointment; one face reflects the smile of another, till each believes the rest delighted, and endeavours to catch and transmit the circulating rapture. In time all are deceived by the cheat to which all contribute. The fiction of happiness is propagated by every tongue, and confirmed by every look, till at last all profess the joy which they do not feel, consent to yield to the general delusion; and when the voluntary dream is at an end, lament that bliss is of so short a duration.

If *Drugget* pretended to pleasures of which he had no perception, or boasted of one amusement where he was indulging another, what did he which is not done by all those who read his story? of whom some *pretend* delight in conversation, only because they *dare not* be alone; some praise the quiet of solitude,

because they are envious of sense, and impatient of folly; and some gratify their pride, by writing characters which expose the vanity of life.

I am, SIR,

Your humble Servant.

N°. 19. SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 1758.

SOME of those ancient sages that have exercised their abilities in the inquiry after the *supreme good*, have been of opinion, that the highest degree of earthly happiness is quiet; a calm repose both of mind and body, undisturbed by the sight of folly or the noise of business, the tumults of public commotion, or the agitations of private interest; a state in which the mind has no other employment, but to observe and regulate her own motions, to trace thought from thought, combine one image with another, raise systems of science, and form theories of virtue.

To the scheme of these solitary speculatists, it has been justly objected, that if they are happy, they are happy only by being useless. That mankind is one vast republic, where every individual receives many benefits from the labours of others, which, by labouring in his turn for others, he is obliged to repay; and that where the united efforts of all are not able to exempt all from misery, none have a right to withdraw from their task of vigilance, or to be indulged in idle wisdom or solitary pleasures.

It is common for controvertists, in the heat of disputation, to add one position to another till they reach the extremities of knowledge, where truth and falsehood lose their distinction. Their admirers follow them to the brink of absurdity, and then start back from each side towards the middle point. So it has happened in this great disquisition. Many perceive alike the force of the contrary arguments, find quiet shameful, and business dangerous, and therefore pass their lives between them, in bustle without business, and negligence without quiet.

Among the principal names of this moderate set is that great philosopher *Jack Whirler*, whose business keeps him in perpetual motion, and whose motion always eludes his business; who is always to do what he never does, who cannot stand still because he is wanted in another place, and who is wanted in many places because he stays in none.

Jack has more business than he can conveniently transact in one house; he has therefore one habitation near *Bow-Church*, and another about a mile distant. By this ingenious distribution of himself between two houses, *Jack* has contrived to be found at neither. *Jack*'s trade is extensive, and he has many dealers; his conversation is sprightly, and he has many companions; his disposition is kind, and he has many friends. *Jack* neither forbears pleasure for business, nor omits business for pleasure, but is equally invisible to his friends and his customers; to him that comes with an invitation to a club, and to him that waits to settle an account.

When you call at his house, his clerk tells you, that Mr. *Whirler* has just stept out, but will be at home exactly at two; you wait at a coffee-house till two and then find that he has been at home, and is gone *out again*, but left word that he should be at the *Half-moon* tavern at seven, where he hopes to meet you

At seven you go to the tavern. At eight in comes Mr. *Whirler* to tell you, that he is glad to see you, and only begs leave to run for a few minutes to a gentleman that lives near the *Exchange*, from whom he will return before supper can be ready. Away he runs to the *Exchange*, to tell those who are waiting for him, that he must beg them to defer the business till to-morrow, because his time is come at the *Half-moon*.

Jack's cheerfulness and civility rank him among those whose presence never gives pain, and whom all receive with fondness and caresses. He calls often on his friends to tell them, that he will come again to-morrow; on the morrow he comes again, to tell them how an unexpected summons hurries him away.—When he enters a house, his first declaration is, that he cannot sit down; and so short are his visits, that he seldom appears to have come for any other reason but to say, He must go.

The dogs of *Egypt*, when thirst brings them to the *Nile*, are said to run as they drink for fear of the crocodiles. *Jack Whirler* always dines at full speed. He enters, finds the family at table, sits familiarly down, and fills his plate; but while the first morsel is in his mouth, hears the clock strike, and rises; then goes to another house, sits down again, recollects another engagement; has only time to taste the soup, makes a short excuse to the company, and continues through another street his desultory dinner.

But, overwhelmed as he is with business, his chief desire is to have still more. Every new proposal takes possession of his thoughts; he soon balances probabilities, engages in the project, brings it almost to completion, and then forsakes it for another, which he catches with some alacrity, urges with the same vehemence, and abandons with the same coldness.

Every man may be observed to have a certain strain of lamentation, some peculiar theme of complaint on which he dwells in his moments of dejection. *Jack*'s topic of sorrow is his want of time. Many an excellent design languishes in empty theory for want of time. For the omission of any civilities, want of time is his plea to others; for the neglect of any affairs, want of time is his excuse to himself. That he wants time, he sincerely believes; for he once pined away many months with a lingering distemper, for want of time to attend his health.

Thus *Jack Whirler* lives in perpetual fatigues without proportionate advantage, because he does not consider that no man can see all with his own eyes, or do all with his own hands; that whoever is engaged in multiplicity of business, must transact much by substitution, and leave something to hazard; and that he who attempts to do all, will waste his life in doing little.

N°. 20. SATURDAY, AUGUST 26, 1758.

THERE is no crime more infamous than the violation of truth. It is apparent that men can be social beings no longer than they believe each other. When speech is employed only as the vehicle of falsehood, every man must disunite himself from others, inhabit his own cave, and seek prey only for himself.

Yet the law of truth, thus sacred and necessary, is broken without punishment, without censure, in

compliance with inveterate prejudice and prevailing passions. Men are willing to credit what they wish, and encourage rather those who gratify them with pleasures, than those that instruct them with fidelity.

For this reason every historian discovers his country; and it is impossible to read the different accounts of any great event, without a wish that truth had more power over partiality.

Amidst the joy of my countrymen for the acquisition of *Louisbourg*, I could not forbear to consider how differently this revolution of *American* power is not only now mentioned by the contending nations, but will be represented by the writers of another century.

The *English* historian will imagine himself barely doing justice to *English* virtue, when he relates the capture of *Louisbourg* in the following manner:

" The *English* had hitherto seen, with great in-
" dignation, their attempts baffled and their force
" defied by an enemy, whom they considered them-
" selves as entitled to conquer by the right of pre-
" scription, and whom many ages of hereditary
" superiority had taught them to despise. Their
" fleets were more numerous, and their seamen
" braver, than those of *France;* yet they only floated
" useless on the ocean, and the *French* derided them
" from their ports. Misfortunes, as is usual, pro-
" duced discontent, the people murmured at the
" ministers, and the ministers censured the com-
" manders.

" In the summer of this year, the *English* began
" to find their success answerable to their cause.
" A fleet and an army were sent to *America* to
" dislodge the enemies from the settlements which
" they had so perfidiously made, and so insolently

" maintained, and to repress that power which was " growing more every day by the association of the " *Indians*, with whom these degenerate *Europeans* " intermarried, and whom they secured to their " party by presents and promises.

" In the beginning of *June* the ships of war and " vessels containing the land-forces appeared before " *Louisbourg*, a place so secure by nature that art " was almost superfluous, and yet fortified by art " as if nature had left it open. The *French* boasted " that it was impregnable, and spoke with scorn " of all attempts that could be made against it. " The garrison was numerous, the stores equal to " the longest siege, and their engineers and com- " manders high in reputation. The mouth of the " harbour was so narrow, that three ships within " might easily defend it against all attacks from " the sea. The *French* had, with that caution " which cowards borrow from fear, and attribute to " policy, eluded our fleets, and sent into that " port five great ships and six smaller, of which " they sunk four in the mouth of the passage, " having raised batteries, and posted troops at all " the places where they thought it possible to make " a descent. The *English*, however, had more to " dread from the roughness of the sea, than from " the skill or bravery of the defendants. Some " days passed before the surges, which rise very " high round that island, would suffer them to " land. At last their impatience could be re- " strained no longer; they got possession of the " shore with little loss by the sea, and with less by " the enemy. In a few days the artillery was land- " ed, the batteries were raised, and the *French* had " no other hope than to escape from one post to " another. A shot from the batteries fired the " powder in one of their largest ships, the flame

" spread to the two next, and all three were de-
" stroyed; the *English* admiral sent his boats against
" the two large ships yet remaining, took them
" without resistance, and terrified the garrison to an
" immediate capitulation."

Let us now oppose to this *English* narrative the relation which will be produced, about the same time, by the writer of the age of *Louis* XV.

" About this time the *English* admitted to the
" conduct of affairs a man who undertook to save
" from destruction that ferocious and turbulent
" people, who, from the mean insolence of wealthy
" traders, and the lawless confidence of successful
" robbers, were now sunk in despair and stupified
" with horror. He called in the ships which had
" been dispersed over the ocean to guard their mer-
" chants, and sent a fleet and an army, in which
" almost the whole strength of *England* was com-
" prised, to secure their possessions in *America*,
" which were endangered alike by the *French* arms
" and the *French* virtue. We had taken the *English*
" fortresses by force, and gained the *Indian* nations
" by humanity. The *English*, wherever they come,
" are sure to have the natives for their enemies; for
" the only motive of their settlements is avarice,
" and the only consequence of their success is op-
" pression. In this war they acted like other bar-
" barians, and, with a degree of outrageous cru-
" elty, which the gentleness of our manners
" scarcely suffers us to conceive, offered rewards
" by open proclamation to those who should bring
" in the scalps of *Indian* women and children. A
" trader always makes war with the cruelty of a
" pirate.

" They had long looked with envy and with ter-
" ror upon the influence which the French exerted
" over all the northern regions of America by the

" possession of *Louisbourg*, a place naturally strong, " and new fortified with some slight outworks. " They hoped to surprise the garrison unprovided; " but that sluggishness which always defeat their " malice, gave us time to send supplies, and to " station ships for the defence of the harbour. " They came before *Louisbourg* in *June*, and were " for some time in doubt whether they should land. " But the commanders, who had lately seen an ad- " miral beheaded for not having done what he had " not power to do, durst not leave the place un- " assaulted. An *Englishman* has no ardour for ho- " nour, nor zeal for duty; he neither values glory " nor loves his king, but balances one danger with " another, and will fight rather than be hanged. " They therefore landed, but with great loss; their " engineers had, in the last war with the *French*, " learned something of the military science, and " made their approaches with sufficient skill; but " all their efforts had been without effect, had not a " ball unfortunately fallen into the powder of one of " our ships, which communicated the fire to the " rest, and, by opening the passage of the harbour, " obliged the garrison to capitulate. Thus was " *Louisbourg* lost, and our troops marched out with " the admiration of their enemies, who durst hardly " think themselves masters of the place."

N° 21. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

DEAR MR. IDLER,

THERE is a species of misery, or of disease, for which our language is commonly supposed to be without a name, but which I think is emphatically enough denominated *listlessness*, and which is commonly termed a want of something to do.

Of the unhappiness of this state I do not expect all your readers to have an adequate idea. Many are overburthened with business, and can imagine no comfort but in rest; many have minds so placid, as willingly to indulge a voluntary lethargy; or so narrow, as easily to be filled to their utmost capacity. By these I shall not be understood, and therefore cannot be pitied. Those only will sympathize with my complaint, whose imagination is active and resolution weak, whose desires are ardent, and whose choice is delicate; who cannot satisfy themselves with standing still, and yet cannot find a motive to direct their course.

I was the second son of a gentleman, whose estate was barely sufficient to support himself and his heir in the dignity of killing game. He therefore made use of the interest which the alliances of his family afforded him, to procure me a post in the army. I passed some years in the most contemptible of all human stations, that of a soldier in time of peace. I wandered with the regiment as the quarters were

changed, without opportunity for business, taste for knowledge, or money for pleasure. Wherever I came, I was for some time a stranger without curiosity, and afterwards an acquaintance without friendship. Having nothing to hope in these places of fortuitous residence, I resigned my conduct to chance; I had no intention to offend, I had no ambition to delight.

I suppose every man is shocked when he hears how frequently soldiers are wishing for war. The wish is not always sincere; the greater part are content with sleep and lace, and counterfeit an ardour which they do not feel; but those who desire it most are neither prompted by malevolence nor patriotism; they neither pant for laurels, nor delight in blood; but long to be delivered from the tyranny of idleness, and restored to the dignity of active beings.

I never imagined myself to have more courage than other men, yet was often involuntarily wishing for a war, but of a war at that time I had no prospect; and being enabled, by the death of an uncle, to live without my pay, I quitted the army, and resolved to regulate my own motions.

I was pleased, for a while, with the novelty of independence, and imagined that I had now found what every man desires. My time was in my own power, and my habitation was wherever my choice should fix it. I amused myself for two years in passing from place to place, and comparing one convenience with another; but being at last ashamed of inquiry, and weary of uncertainty, I purchased a house, and established my family.

I now expected to begin to be happy, and was happy for a short time with that expectation. But I soon perceived my spirits to subside, and my imagination to grow dark. The gloom thickened every day round me. I wondered by what malignant

power my peace was blasted, till I discovered at last that I had nothing to do.

Time, with all its celerity, moves slowly to him whose whole employment is to watch its flight. I am forced upon a thousand shifts to enable me to endure the tediousness of the day. I rise when I can sleep no longer, and take my morning walk; I see what I have seen before, and return. I sit down and persuade myself that I sit down to think, find it impossible to think without a subject, rise up to inquire after news, and endeavour to kindle in myself an artificial impatience for intelligence of events, which will never extend any consequence to me, but that a few minutes they abstract me from myself.

When I have heard any thing that may gratify curiosity, I am busied for a while in running to relate it. I hasten from one place of concourse to another, delighted with my own importance, and proud to think that I am doing something, though I know that another hour would spare my labour.

I had once a round of visits, which I paid very regularly; but I have now tired most of my friends. When I have sat down I forget to rise, and have more than once overheard one asking another when I would be gone. I perceive the company tired, I observe the mistress of the family whispering to her servants, I find orders given to put off business till to-morrow, I see the watches frequently inspected, and yet cannot withdraw to the vacuity of solitude, or venture myself in my own company.

Thus burthensome to myself and others, I form many schemes of employment which may make my life useful or agreeable, and exempt me from the ignominy of living by sufferance. This new course I have long designed, but have not yet begun. The *present moment is* never proper for the change, but

there is always a time in view when all obstacles will be removed, and I shall surprise all that know me with a new distribution of my time. Twenty years have past since I have resolved a complete amendment, and twenty years have been lost in delays. Age is coming upon me; and I should look back with rage and despair upon the waste of life, but that I am now beginning in earnest to begin a reformation.

I am, SIR,

Your humble servant,

DICK LINGER.

N°. 22. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

As I was passing lately under one of the gates of this city, I was struck with horror by a rueful cry, which summoned me *to remember the poor debtors.*

The wisdom and justice of the *English* laws are, by *Englishmen* at least, loudly celebrated; but scarcely the most zealous admirers of our institutions can think that law wise, which, when men are capable of work, obliges them to beg; or just, which exposes the liberty of one to the passions of another.

The prosperity of a people is proportionate to the number of hands and minds usefully employed. To the community, sedition is a fever, corruption is a gangrene, and idleness is an atrophy. Whatever body,

and whatever society wastes more than it acquires, must gradually decay; and every being that continues to be fed, and ceases to labour, takes away something from the public stock.

The confinement, therefore, of any man in the sloth and darkness of a prison, is a loss to the nation, and no gain to the creditor. For of the multitudes who are pining in those cells of misery, a very small part is suspected of any fraudulent act by which they retain what belongs to others. The rest are imprisoned by the wantonness of pride, the malignity of revenge, or the acrimony of disappointed expectation.

If those, who thus rigorously exercise the power which the law has put into their hands, be asked, why they continue to imprison those whom they know to be unable to pay them? one will answer, that his debtor once lived better than himself; another, that his wife looked above her neighbours, and his children went in silk clothes to the dancing-school; and another, that he pretended to be a joker and a wit. Some will reply, that if they were in debt, they should meet with the same treatment; some, that they owe no more than they can pay, and need therefore give no account of their actions. Some will confess their resolution that their debtors shall rot in jail; and some will discover, that they hope, by cruelty, to wring the payment from their friends.

The end of all civil regulations is to secure private happiness from private malignity; to keep individuals from the power of one another; but this end is apparently neglected, when a man, irritated with loss, is allowed to be the judge of his own cause, and to assign the punishment of his own pain; when the distinction between guilt and happiness, between ca-

sualty and design, is entrusted to eyes blind with interest, to understandings depraved by resentment.

Since poverty is punished among us as a crime, it ought at least to be treated with the same lenity as other crimes: the offender ought not to languish at the will of him whom he has offended, but to be allowed some appeal to the justice of his country. There can be no reason why any debtor should be imprisoned, but that he may be compelled to payment; and a term should therefore be fixed, in which the creditor should exhibit his accusation of concealed property. If such property can be discovered, let it be given to the creditor; if the charge is not offered, or cannot be proved, let the prisoner be dismissed.

Those who made the laws have apparently supposed, that every deficiency of payment is the crime of the debtor. But the truth is, that the creditor always shares the act, and often more than shares the guilt, of improper trust. It seldom happens that any man imprisons another but for debts which he suffered to be contracted in hope of advantage to himself, and for bargains in which he proportioned his profit to his own opinion of the hazard; and there is no reason, why one should punish the other for a contract in which both concurred.

Many of the inhabitants of prisons may justly complain of harder treatment. He that once owes more than he can pay, is often obliged to bribe his creditor to patience, by encreasing his debt. Worse and worse commodities, at a higher and higher price, are forced upon him; he is impoverished by compulsive traffic, and at last overwhelmed, in the common receptacles of misery, by debts, which, without his own consent, were accumulated on his head. To the relief of this distress, no other objection can be made, but that by an easy dissolution of debts fraud will be

left without punishment, and imprudence without awe; and that when insolvency should be no longer punishable, credit will cease.

The motive to credit, is the hope of advantage. Commerce can never be at a stop, while one man wants what another can supply; and credit will never be denied, while it is likely to be repaid with profit. He that trusts one whom he designs to sue, is criminal by the act of trust; the cessation of such insidious traffic is to be desired, and no reason can be given why a change of the law should impair any other.

We see nation trade with nation, where no payment can be compelled. Mutual convenience produces mutual confidence; and the merchants continue to satisfy the demands of each other, though they have nothing to dread but the loss of trade.

It is vain to continue an institution, which experience shows to be ineffectual. We have now imprisoned one generation of debtors after another, but we do not find that their numbers lessen. We have now learned, that rashness and imprudence will not be deterred from taking credit; let us try whether fraud and avarice may be more easily restrained from giving it.

I am, SIR, &c.

N°. 23. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 17

LIFE has no pleasure higher or nobler than tha friendship. It is painful to consider, that this s lime enjoyment may be impaired or destroyed innumerable causes, and that there is no hur possession of which the duration is less certain.

Many have talked, in very exalted language, the perpetuity of friendship, of invincible constar and unalienable kindness; and some examples h been seen of men who have continued faithful their earliest choice, and whose affection has pre minated over changes of fortune, and contrariet opinion.

But these instances are memorable, because t are rare. The friendship which is to be practisec expected by common mortals, must take its rise fi mutual pleasure, and must end when the po ceases of delighting each other.

Many accidents therefore may happen, by wh the ardour of kindness will be abated, without minal baseness or contemptible inconstancy on eit part. To give pleasure is not always in our pow and little does he know himself, who believes t he can be always able to receive it.

Those who would gladly pass their days toget may be separated by the different course of th affairs: and friendship, like love, is destroyed long absence, though it may be increased by sh intermissions. What we have missed long enou to want it, we value more when it is regained; that which has been lost till it is forgotten, will

found at last with little gladness, and with still less if a substitute has supplied the place. A man deprived of the companion to whom he used to open his bosom, and with whom he shared the hours of leisure and merriment, feels the day at first hanging heavy on him; his difficulties oppress, and his doubts distract him; he sees time come and go without his wonted gratification, and all is sadness within, and solitude about him. But this uneasiness never lasts long; necessity produces expedients, new amusements are discovered, and new conversation is admitted.

No expectation is more frequently disappointed, than that which naturally arises in the mind from the prospect of meeting an old friend after long separation. We expect the attraction to be revived, and the coalition to be renewed; no man considers how much alteration time has made in himself, and very few inquire what effect it has had upon others. The first hour convinces them, that the pleasure, which they have formerly enjoyed, is for ever at an end; different scenes have made different impressions; the opinions of both are changed; and that similitude of manners and sentiment is lost, which confirmed them both in the approbation of themselves.

Friendship is often destroyed by opposition of interest, not only by the ponderous and visible interest which the desire of wealth and greatness forms and maintains, but by a thousand secret and slight competitions, scarcely known to the mind upon which they operate. There is scarcely any man without some favourite trifle which he values above greater attainments, some desire of petty praise which he cannot patiently suffer to be frustrated. This minute ambition is sometimes crossed before it is known, and sometimes defeated by wanton petu-

lance; but such attacks are seldom made without the loss of friendship; for whoever has once found the vulnerable part will always be feared, and the resentment will burn on in secret, of which shame hinders the discovery.

This, however, is a slow malignity, which a wise man will obviate as inconsistent with quiet, and a good man will repress as contrary to virtue; but human happiness is sometimes violated by some more sudden strokes.

A dispute begun in jest upon a subject which a moment before was on both parts regarded with careless indifference, is continued by the desire of conquest, till vanity kindles into rage, and opposition rankles into enmity. Against this hasty mischief, I know not what security can be obtained; men will be sometimes surprised into quarrels; and though they might both hasten to reconciliation, as soon as their tumult had subsided, yet two minds will seldom be found together, which can at once subdue their discontent, or immediately enjoy the sweets of peace, without remembering the wounds of the conflict.

Friendship has other enemies. Suspicion is always hardening the cautious, and disgust repelling the delicate. Very slender differences will sometimes part those whom long reciprocation of civility or beneficence has united. *Lonelove* and *Ranger* retired into the country to enjoy the company of each other, and returned in six weeks cold and petulant. *Ranger*'s pleasure was to walk in the fields, and *Lonelove*'s to sit in a bower; each had complied with the other in his turn, and each was angry that compliance had been exacted.

The most fatal disease of friendship is gradual decay, or dislike hourly increased by causes too slender for complaint, and too numerous for removal.—

Those who are angry may be reconciled; those who have been injured may receive a recompence; but when the desire of pleasing and willingness to be pleased is silently diminished, the renovation of friendship is hopeless; as, when the vital powers sink into languor, there is no longer any use of the physician.

N°. 24. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1758.

WHEN man sees one of the inferior creatures perched upon a tree, or basking in the sunshine, without any apparent endeavour or pursuit, he often asks himself, or his companion, *On what that animal can be supposed to be thinking?*

Of this question, since neither bird nor beast can answer it, we must be content to live without the resolution. We know not how much the brutes recollect of the past, or anticipate of the future; what power they have of comparing and preferring; or whether their faculties may not rest in motionless indifference, till they are moved by the presence of their proper object, or stimulated to act by corporal sensations.

I am the less inclined to these superfluous inquiries, because I have always been able to find sufficient matter for curiosity in my own species. It is useless to go far in quest of that which may be found at home; a very narrow circle of observation will supply a sufficient number of men and women, who might be asked, with equal propriety, *On what they can be thinking?*

It is reasonable to believe, that thought, like every

thing else, has its causes and effects; that it must proceed from something known, done, or suffered; and must produce some action or event. Yet how great is the number of those in whose minds no source of thought has ever been opened, in whose life no thought of consequence is ever discovered who have learned nothing upon which they can reflect; who have neither seen nor felt any thing which could leave its traces on the memory; who neither foresee nor desire any change of their condition, and have therefore neither fear, hope, nor design, and yet are supposed to be thinking beings.

To every act a subject is required. He that thinks, must think upon something. But tell me ye that pierce deepest into nature, ye that take the widest surveys of life, inform me, kind shades of *Malbranche* and of *Locke*, what that something can be, which excites and continues thought in maiden aunts with small fortunes; in younger brothers that live upon annuities; in traders retired from business in soldiers absent from their regiments; or in widows that have no children?

Life is commonly considered as either active or contemplative; but surely this division, how long soever it has been received, is inadequate and fallacious. There are mortals whose life is certainly not active, for they do neither good nor evil; and whose life cannot be properly called contemplative for they never attend either to the conduct of men or the works of nature, but rise in the morning, look round them till night in careless stupidity, go to bed and sleep, and rise again in the morning.

It has been lately a celebrated question in the schools of philosophy, *Whether the soul always thinks?* Some have defined the soul to be the *power of thinking;* concluded that its essence consists in act; that, if it should cease to act, it would cease to

be; and that cessation of thought is but another name for extinction of mind. This argument is subtle, but not conclusive; because it supposes what cannot be proved, that the nature of mind is properly defined. Others affect to disdain subtilty, when subtilty will not serve their purpose, and appeal to daily experience. We spend many hours, they say, in sleep, without the least remembrance of any thoughts which then passed in our minds; and since we can only by our own consciousness be sure that we think, why should we imagine that we have had thought of which no consciousness remains?

This argument, which appeals to experience, may from experience be confuted. We every day do something which we forget when it is done, and know to have been done only by consequence. The waking hours are not denied to have been passed in thought; yet he that shall endeavour to recollect on one day the ideas of the former, will only turn the eye of reflection upon vacancy; he will find, that the greater part is irrevocably vanished, and wonder how the moments could come and go, and leave so little behind them.

To discover only that the arguments on both sides are defective, and to throw back the tenet into its former uncertainty, is the sport of wanton or malevolent scepticism, delighting to see the sons of philosophy at work upon a task which never can be decided. I shall suggest an argument hitherto overlooked, which may perhaps determine the controversy.

If it be impossible to think without materials, there must necessarily be minds that do not always think; and whence shall we furnish materials for the meditation of the glutton between his meals, of the sportsman in a rainy month, of the annuitant between

the days of quarterly payment, of the politician when the mails are detained by contrary winds?

But how frequent soever may be the examples of existence without thought, it is certainly a state not much to be desired. He that lives in torpid insensibility, wants nothing of a carcase but putrefaction. It is the part of every inhabitant of the earth to partake the pains and pleasures of his fellow-beings: and, as in a road through a country desart and uniform, the traveller languishes for want of amusement, so the passage of life will be tedious and irksome to him who does not beguile it by diversified ideas.

N°. 25. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I AM a very constant frequenter of the playhouse, a place to which I suppose the *Idler* not much a stranger, since he can have no where else so much entertainment with so little concurrence of his own endeavour. At all other assemblies, he that comes to receive delight, will be expected to give it; but in the theatre nothing is necessary to the amusement of two hours, but to sit down and be willing to be pleased.

The last week has offered two new actors to the town. The appearance and retirement of actors are *the great* events of the theatrical world; and their *first performance* fill the pit with conjecture and

prognostication, as the first actions of a new monarch agitate nations with hope or fear.

What opinion I have formed of the future excellence of these candidates for dramatic glory, it is not necessary to declare. Their entrance gave me a higher and nobler pleasure than any borrowed character can afford. I saw the ranks of the theatre emulating each other in candour and humanity, and contending who should most effectually assist the struggles of endeavour, dissipate the blush of diffidence, and still the flutter of timidity.

This behaviour is such as becomes a people, too tender to repress those who wish to please, too generous to insult those who can make no resistance. A public performer is so much in the power of spectators, that all unnecessary severity is restrained by that general law of humanity which forbids us to be cruel where there is nothing to be feared.

In every new performer something must be pardoned. No man can, by any force of resolution, secure to himself the full possession of his own powers under the eye of a large assembly. Variation of gesture, and flexion of voice, are to be obtained only by experience.

There is nothing for which such numbers think themselves qualified as for theatrical exhibition. Every human being has an action graceful to his own eye, a voice musical to his own ear, and a sensibility which nature forbids him to know that any other bosom can excel. An art in which such numbers fancy themselves excellent, and which the public liberally rewards, will excite many competitors, and in many attempts there must be many miscarriages.

The care of the critic should be to distinguish error from inability, faults of inexperience from de-

fects of nature. Action irregular and turbulent may be reclaimed; vociferation vehement and confused may be restrained and modulated; the stalk of the tyrant may become the gait of the man; the yell of inarticulate distress may be reduced to human lamentation. All these faults should be for a time overlooked, and afterwards censured with gentleness and candour. But if in an actor there appears an utter vacancy of meaning, a frigid equality, a stupid languor, a torpid apathy, the greatest kindness that can be shown him, is a speedy sentence of expulsion.

I am, Sir, &c.

The plea which my correspondent has offered for young actors, I am very far from wishing to invalidate. I always considered those combinations which are sometimes formed in the playhouse, as acts of fraud or of cruelty; he that applauds him who does not deserve praise, is endeavouring to deceive the public; he that hisses in malice or sport, is an oppressor and a robber.

But surely this laudable forbearance might be justly extended to young poets. The art of the writer, like that of the player, is attained by slow degrees. The power of distinguishing and discriminating comic characters, or of filling tragedy with poetical images, must be the gift of nature, which no instruction nor labour can supply; but the art of dramatic disposition, the contexture of the scenes, the opposition of characters, the involution of the plot, the expedients of suspension, and the stratagems of surprise, are to be learned by practice; and it is cruel to discourage a poet for ever, because he has not from genius what only experience can bestow.

Life is a stage. Let me likewise solicit candour

for the young actor on the stage of life. They that enter into the world are too often treated with unreasonable rigour by those that were once as ignorant and heady as themselves; and distinction is not always made between the faults which require speedy and violent eradication, and those that will gradually drop away in the progression of life. Vicious solicitations of appetite, if not checked, will grow more importunate; and mean arts of profit or ambition will gather strength in the mind, if they are not early suppressed. But mistaken notions of superiority, desires of useless show, pride of little accomplishments, and all the train of vanity, will be brushed away by the wing of Time.

Reproof should not exhaust its power upon petty failings; let it watch diligently against the incursion of vice, and leave foppery and futility to die of themselves.

No. 26. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1758.

MR. IDLER,

I NEVER thought that I should write any thing to be printed; but having lately seen your first essay, which was sent down into the kitchen, with a great bundle of gazettes and useless papers, I find that you are willing to admit any correspondent, and therefore hope you will not reject me. If you publish my letter, it may encourage others, in the same condition with myself, to tell their stories, which may be perhaps as useful as those of great ladies.

I am a poor girl. I was bred in the country at a charity-school, maintained by the contributions of wealthy neighbours. The ladies, or patronesses, visited us from time to time, examined how we were taught, and saw that our clothes were clean. We lived happily enough, and were instructed to be thankful to those at whose cost we were educated. I was always the favourite of my mistress; she used to call me to read, and show my copy-book to all strangers, who never dismissed me without commendation, and very seldom without a shilling.

At last the chief of our subscribers, having passed a winter in *London*, came down full of an opinion new and strange to the whole country. She held it little less than criminal to teach poor girls to read and write. They who are born to poverty, said she, are born to ignorance, and will work the harder, the less they know. She told her friends, that *London* was in confusion by the insolence of servants; that scarcely a wench was to be got for *all work*, since education had made such numbers of fine ladies, that nobody would now accept a lower title than that of a waiting-maid, or something that might qualify her to wear laced shoes and long ruffles, and to sit at work in the parlour window. But she was resolved, for her part, to spoil no more girls; those, who were to live by their hands, should neither read nor write out of her pocket; the world was bad enough already, and she would have no part in making it worse.

She was for a short time warmly opposed; but she persevered in her notions, and withdrew her subscription. Few listen without a desire of conviction to those who advise them to spare their money. Her example and her arguments gained ground daily; and in less than a year the whole parish was con-

vinced, that the nation would be ruined, if the children of the poor were taught to read and write.

Our school was now dissolved: my mistress kissed me when we parted, and told me, that, being old and helpless, she could not assist me, advised me to seek a service, and charged me not to forget what I had learned.

My reputation for scholarship, which had hitherto recommended me to favour, was, by the adherents to the new opinion, considered as a crime; and, when I offered myself to any mistress, I had no other answer than *Sure, child, you would not work! hard work is not fit for a pen-woman; a scrubbing-brush would spoil your hand, child!*

I could not live at home; and while I was considering to what I should betake me, one of the girls, who had gone from our school to *London*, came down in a silk gown, and told her acquaintance how well she lived, what fine things she saw, and what great wages she received. I resolved to try my fortune, and took my passage in the next week's waggon to *London*. I had no snares laid for me at my arrival, but came safe to a sister of my mistress, who undertook to get me a place. She knew only the families of mean tradesmen; and I, having no high opinion of my own qualifications, was willing to accept the first offer.

My first mistress was wife of a working watchmaker, who earned more than was sufficient to keep his family in decency and plenty; but it was their constant practice to hire a chaise on *Sunday*, and spend half the wages of the week on *Richmond Hill;* of *Monday* he commonly lay half in bed, and spent the other half in merriment; *Tuesday* and *Wednesday* consumed the rest of his money; and

three days every week were passed in extremity of want by us who were left at home, while my master lived on trust at an alehouse. You may be sure, that of the sufferers, the maid suffered most; and I left them, after three months, rather than be starved.

I was then maid to a hatter's wife. There was no want to be dreaded, for they lived in perpetual luxury. My mistress was a diligent woman, and rose early in the morning to set the journeymen to work; my master was a man much beloved by his neighbours, and sat at one club or other every night. I was obliged to wait on my master at night, and on my mistress in the morning. He seldom came home before two, and she rose at five. I could no more live without sleep than without food, and therefore entreated them to look out for another servant.

My next removal was to a linen-draper's, who had six children. My mistress, when I first entered the house, informed me, that I must never contradict the children nor suffer them to cry. I had no desire to offend, and readily promised to do my best. But when I gave them their breakfast, I could not help all first; when I was playing with one in my lap, I was forced to keep the rest in expectation. That which was not gratified, always resented the injury with a loud outcry, which put my mistress in a fury at me, and procured sugar-plumbs to the child. I could not keep six children quiet who were bribed to be clamorous; and was therefore dismissed, as a girl honest, but not good-natured.

I then lived with a couple that kept a petty shop *of remnants* and cheap linen. I was qualified to *make a bill*, or keep a book; and being therefore *often called*, at a busy time, to serve the customers,

expected that I should now be happy, in proportion as I was useful. But my mistress appropriated every day part of the profit to some private use, and, as she grew bolder in her theft, at last deducted such sums, that my master began to wonder how he sold so much, and gained so little. She pretended to assist his inquiries, and began, very gravely, to hope that *Betty was honest, and yet those sharp girls were apt to be light-fingered.* You will believe that I did not stay there much longer.

The rest of my story I will tell you in another letter; and only beg to be informed, in some paper, for which of my places, except perhaps the last, I was disqualified by my skill in reading and writing.

I am, SIR,

Your very humble servant,

BETTY BROOM.

N°. 27. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1758.

IT has been the endeavour of all those whom the world has reverenced for superior wisdom, to persuade man to be acquainted with himself, to learn his own powers and his own weakness, to observe by what evils he is most dangerously beset, and by what temptations most easily overcome.

This counsel has been often given with serious dignity, and often received with appearance of conviction; but, as very few can search deep into their *own minds* without meeting what they wish

to hide from themselves, scarcely any man persists in cultivating such disagreeable acquaintance, but draws the veil again between his eyes and his heart, leaves his passions and appetites as he found them, and advises others to look into themselves.

This is the common result of inquiry even among those that endeavour to grow wiser or better: but this endeavour is far enough from frequency; the greater part of the multitudes that swarm upon the earth have never been disturbed by such uneasy curiosity, but deliver themselves up to business or to pleasure, plunge into the current of life, whether placid or turbulent, and pass on from one point of prospect to another, attentive rather to any thing than the state of their minds; satisfied, at an easy rate, with an opinion, that they are no worse than others, that every man must mind his own interest, or that their pleasures hurt only themselves, and are therefore no proper subjects of censure.

Some, however, there are, whom the intrusion of scruples, the recollection of better notions, or the latent reprehension of good examples, will not suffer to live entirely contented with their own conduct; these are forced to pacify the mutiny of reason with fair promises, and quiet their thoughts with designs of calling all their actions to review, and planning a new scheme for the time to come.

There is nothing which we estimate so fallaciously as the force of our own resolutions, nor any fallacy which we so unwillingly and tardily detect. He that has resolved a thousand times, and a thousand times deserted his own purpose, yet suffers no abatement of his confidence, but still believes himself his own master; and able, by innate vigour of soul, to press forward to his end, through all the

obstructions that inconveniences or delights can put in his way.

That this mistake should prevail for a time is very natural. When conviction is present, and temptation out of sight, we do not easily conceive how any reasonable being can deviate from his true interest. What ought to be done while it yet hangs only in speculation, is so plain and certain, that there is no place for doubt; the whole soul yields itself to the predominance of truth, and readily determines to do what, when the time of action comes, will be at last omitted.

I believe most men may review all the lives that have passed within their observation, without remembering one efficacious resolution, or being able to tell a single instance of a course of practice suddenly changed in consequence of a change of opinion, or an establishment of determination. Many, indeed, alter their conduct, and are not at fifty what they were at thirty; but they commonly varied imperceptibly from themselves, followed the train of external causes, and rather suffered reformation than made it.

It is not uncommon to charge the difference between promise and performance, between profession and reality, upon deep design and studied deceit; but the truth is, that there is very little hypocrisy in the world; we do not so often endeavour or wish to impose on others as on ourselves; we resolve to do right, we hope to keep our resolutions, we declare them to confirm our own hope, and fix our own inconstancy by calling witnesses of our actions; but at last habit prevails, and those whom we invited to our triumph, laugh at our defeat.

Custom is commonly too strong for the most resolute *resolver*, though furnished for the assault with *all the weapons* of philosophy. "He that endea-

" vours to free himself from an ill habit," says *Bacon*, " must not change too much at a time, lest " he should be discouraged by difficulty; nor too " little, for then he will make but slow advances." This is a precept which may be applauded in a book, but will fail in the trial, in which every change will be found too great or too little. Those who have been able to conquer habit, are like those that are fabled to have returned from the realms of *Pluto:*

Pauci, quos æquus amavit
Jupiter, atque ardens evexit ad æthera virtus.

They are sufficient to give hope, but not security; to animate the contest, but not to promise victory.

Those who are in the power of evil habits, must conquer them as they can; and conquered they must be, or neither wisdom nor happiness can be attained; but those who are not yet subject to their influence may, by timely caution, preserve their freedom; they may effectually resolve to escape the tyrant, whom they will very vainly resolve to conquer.

N°. 28. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

It it very easy for a man who sits idle at home, and has nobody to please but himself, to ridicule or to censure the common practices of mankind;

and those who have no present temptation to break the rules of propriety, may applaud his judgment, and join in his merriment; but let the author or his readers mingle with common life, they will find themselves irresistibly borne away by the stream of custom, and must submit, after they have laughed at others, to give others the same opportunity of laughing at them.

There is no paper published by the *Idler* which I have read with more approbation than that which censures the practice of recording vulgar marriages in the newspapers. I carried it about in my pocket, and read it to all those whom I suspected of having published their nuptials, or of being inclined to publish them, and sent transcripts of it to all the couples that transgressed your precepts for the next fortnight. I hoped that they were all vexed, and pleased myself with imagining their misery.

But short is the triumph of malignity. I was married last week to Miss *Mohair*, the daughter of a salesman; and, at my first appearance after the wedding night, was asked by my wife's mother whether I had sent our marriage to the *Advertiser!* I endeavoured to show how unfit it was to demand the attention of the public to our domestic affairs; but she told me, with great vehemence, "That "she would not have it thought to be a stolen "match; that the blood of the *Mohairs* should "never be disgraced; that her husband had served "all the parish offices but one; that she had lived "five-and-thirty years at the same house, had paid "every body twenty shillings in the pound, and "would have me know, though she was not as "fine and as flaunting as Mrs. *Gingham*, the "*deputy's wife*, she was not ashamed to tell her "*name, and would* show her face with the best of

" them, and since I had married her daughter——" At this instant entered my father-in-law, a grave man, from whom I expected succour; but upon hearing the case, he told me, " That it would be " very imprudent to miss such an opportunity of " advertising my shop; and that when notice was " given of my marriage, many of my wife's friends " would think themselves obliged to be my custo- " mers." I was subdued by clamour on one side, and gravity on the other, and shall be obliged to tell the town, that *three days ago* Timothy Mushroom, *an eminent oilman in* Sea-Coal-Lane, *was married to Miss* Polly Mohair, *of* Lothbury, *a beautiful young lady, with a large fortune.*

I am, SIR, *&c.*

SIR,

I AM the unfortunate wife of the grocer whose letter you published about ten weeks ago, in which he complains, like a sorry fellow, that I loiter in the shop with my needle-work in my hand, and that I oblige him to take me out on *Sundays*, and keep a girl to look after the child. Sweet Mr. *Idler*, if you did but know all, you would give no encouragement to such an unreasonable grumbler. I brought him three hundred pounds, which set him up in a shop, and bought in a stock, on which, with good management, we might live comfortably; but now I have given him a shop, I am forced to watch him and the shop too. I will tell you, Mr. *Idler*, how it is. There is an ale-house over the way, with a nine-pin alley, to which he is sure to run when I turn

my back, and there he loses his money, for he plays at nine-pins as he does every thing else. While he is at this favourite sport, he sets a dirty boy to watch his door, and call him to his customers; but he is long in coming, and so rude when he comes, that our custom falls off every day.

Those who cannot govern themselves, must be governed. I am resolved to keep him for the future behind his counter, and let him bounce at his customers if he dares. I cannot be above stairs and below at the same time, and have therefore taken a girl to look after the child, and dress the dinner; and, after all, pray who is to blame?

On a *Sunday*, it is true, I make him walk abroad, and sometimes carry the child;—I wonder who should carry it! But I never take him out till after church-time, nor would do it then, but that, if he is left alone, he will be upon the bed. On a *Sunday*, if he stays at home, he has six meals; and, when he can eat no longer, has twenty stratagems to escape from me to the ale-house; but I commonly keep the door locked, till *Monday* produces something for him to do.

This is the true state of the case, and these are the provocations for which he has written his letter to you, I hope you will write a paper to show that, if a wife must spend her whole time in watching her husband, she cannot conveniently tend her child, or sit at her needle.

I am, SIR, *&c.*

SIR,

THERE is in this town a species of oppression which the law has not hitherto prevented or redressed.

I am a chairman. You know, Sir, we come when we are called, and are expected to carry all who require our assistance. It is common for men of the most unwieldy corpulence to crowd themselves into a chair, and demand to be carried for a shilling as far as an airy young lady whom we scarcely feel upon our poles. Surely we ought to be paid like all other mortals, in proportion to our labour. Engines should be fixed in proper places to weigh chairs as they weigh waggons; and those, whom ease and plenty have made unable to carry themselves, should give part of their superfluities to those who carry them.

I am, SIR, *&c.*

N°. 29. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I HAVE often observed, that friends are lost by discontinuance of intercourse, without any offence on either part, and have long known, that it is more

dangerous to be forgotten than to be blamed; I therefore make haste to send you the rest of my story, lest, by the delay of another fortnight, the name of *Betty Broom* might be no longer remembered by you or your readers.

Having left the last place in haste, to avoid the charge or the suspicion of theft, I had not secured another service, and was forced to take a lodging in a back street. I had now got good clothes. The woman who lived in the garret opposite to mine was very officious, and offered to take care of my room and clean it, while I went round to my acquaintance to inquire for a mistress. I knew not why she was so kind, nor how I could recompense her; but in a few days I missed some of my linen, went to another lodging, and resolved not to have another friend in the next garret.

In six weeks I became under-maid at the house of a mercer in *Cornhill*, whose son was his apprentice. The young gentleman used to sit late at the tavern, without the knowledge of his father; and I was ordered by my mistress to let him in silently to his bed under the counter, and to be very careful to take away his candle. The hours which I was obliged to watch, whilst the rest of the family was in bed, I considered as supernumerary, and, having no business assigned for them, thought myself at liberty to spend them my own way: I kept myself awake with a book, and for some time liked my state the better for this opportunity of reading. At last, the upper-maid found my book, and showed it to my mistress, who told me, that wenches like me might spend their time better; that she never knew any of the readers that had good designs in their heads; that she could always find something else to do with her time, than to *puzzle over books*; and did not like that such a *fine lady should sit* up for her young master.

This was the first time that I found it thought criminal or dangerous to know how to read. I was dismissed decently, lest I should tell tales, and had a small gratuity above my wages.

I then lived with a gentlewoman of a small fortune. This was the only happy part of my life. My mistress, for whom public diversions were too expensive, spent her time with books, and was pleased to find a maid who could partake her amusements. I rose early in the morning, that I might have time in the afternoon to read or listen, and was suffered to tell my opinion, or express my delight. Thus fifteen months stole away, in which I did not repine that I was born to servitude. But a burning fever seized my mistress, of whom I shall say no more, than that her servant wept upon her grave.

I had lived in a kind of luxury which made me very unfit for another place; and was rather too delicate for the conversation of a kitchen; so that when I was hired in the family of an East-India director, my behaviour was so different, as they said, from that of a common servant, that they concluded me a gentlewoman in disguise, and turned me out in three weeks, on suspicion of some design which they could not comprehend.

I then fled for refuge to the other end of the town, where I hoped to find no obstruction from my new accomplishments, and was hired under the housekeeper in a splendid family. Here I was too wise for the maids, and too nice for the footmen; yet I might have lived on without much uneasiness, had not my mistress, the housekeeper, who used to employ me in buying necessaries for the family, found a bill which I had made of one day's expence. I suppose it did not quite agree with her own book, for she fiercely declared her resolution, that there should be no pen and ink in that kitchen but her own.

She had the justice, or the prudence, not to injure my reputation; and I was easily admitted into another house in the neighbourhood, where my business was to sweep the rooms and make the beds. Here I was for some time the favourite of Mrs. *Simper*, my lady's woman, who could not bear the vulgar girls, and was happy in the attendance of a young woman of some education. Mrs. *Simper* loved a novel, though she could not read hard words, and therefore, when her lady was abroad, we always laid hold on her books. At last, my abilities became so much celebrated, that the house-steward used to employ me in keeping his accounts. Mrs. *Simper* then found out, that my sauciness was grown to such a height that nobody could endure it, and told my lady, that there never had been a room well swept since *Betty Broom* came into the house.

I was then hired by a consumptive lady, who wanted a maid that could read and write. I attended her four years, and though she was never pleased, yet when I declared my resolution to leave her, she burst into tears, and told me that I must bear the peevishness of a sick bed, and I should find myself remembered in her will. I complied, and a codicil was added in my favour; but in less than a week, when I set her gruel before her, I laid the spoon on the left side, and she threw her will into the fire. In two days she made another, which she burnt in the same manner, because she could not eat her chicken. A third was made, and destroyed because she heard a mouse within the wainscot, and was sure that I should suffer her to be carried away alive. After this I was for some time out of favour, but as her illness grew upon her, resentment and sullenness gave way to kinder sentiments. She died, and left me five hundred pounds; with this fortune I am

going to settle in my native parish, where I resolve to spend some hours every day in teaching poor girls to read and write.

I am, SIR,

Your humble servant.

BETTY BROOM.

N°. 30. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1758.

THE desires of man increase with his acquisitions; every step which he advances brings something within his view, which he did not see before, and which, as soon as he sees it, he begins to want. Where necessity ends, curiosity begins; and no sooner are we supplied with every thing that nature can demand, than we sit down to contrive artificial appetites.

By this restlessness of mind, every populous and wealthy city is filled with innumerable employments, for which the greater part of mankind is without a name; with artificers, whose labour is exerted in producing such petty conveniences, that many shops are furnished with instruments of which the use can hardly be found without inquiry, but which he that once knows them quickly learns to number among necessary things.

Such is the diligence with which, in countries completely civilized, one part of mankind labours *for another*, that wants are supplied faster than they *can be formed*, and the idle and luxurious find life

stagnate for want of some desire to keep it in motion. This species of distress furnishes a new set of occupations; and multitudes are busied, from day to day, in finding the rich and the fortunate something to do.

It is very common to reproach those artists as useless, who produce only such superfluities as neither accommodate the body, nor improve the mind; and of which no other effect can be imagined, than that they are the occasions of spending money, and consuming time.

But this censure will be mitigated when it is seriously considered that money and time are the heaviest burthens of life, and that the unhappiest of all mortals are those who have more of either than they know how to use. To set himself free from these incumbrances, one hurries to *Newmarket;* another travels over *Europe;* one pulls down his house and calls architects about him; another buys a seat in the country, and follows his hounds over hedges and through rivers; one makes collections of shells; and another searches the world for tulips and carnations.

He is surely a public benefactor who finds employment for those to whom it is thus difficult to find it for themselves. It is true, that this is seldom done merely from generosity or compassion; almost every man seeks his own advantage in helping others, and therefore it is too common for mercenary officiousness to consider rather what is grateful, than what is right.

We all know that it is more profitable to be loved than esteemed; and ministers of pleasure will always be found, who study to make themselves necessary, and to supplant those who are practising the same arts.

One of the amusements of idleness is reading without the fatigue of close attention, and the world,

therefore, swarms with writers whose wish is not to be studied, but to be read.

No species of literary men has lately been so much multiplied as the writers of news. Not many years ago the nation was content with one gazette; but now we have not only in the metropolis papers for every morning and every evening, but almost every large town has its weekly historian, who regularly circulates his periodical intelligence, and fills the villages of his district with conjectures on the events of war, and with debates on the true interest of *Europe*.

To write news in its perfection requires such a combination of qualities, that a man completely fitted for the task is not always to be found. In Sir *Henry Wotton's* jocular definition, *An ambassador* is said to be *a man of virtue sent abroad to tell lies for the advantage of his country;* a news-writer is *a man without virtue, who writes lies at home for his own profit.* To these compositions is required neither genius nor knowledge, neither industry nor sprightliness; but contempt of shame, and indifference to truth, are absolutely necessary. He who by a long familiarity with infamy has obtained these qualities, may confidently tell to-day what he intends to contradict to-morrow; he may affirm fearlessly what he knows that he shall be obliged to recant, and may write letters from *Amsterdam* or *Dresden* to himself.

In a time of war the nation is always of one mind, eager to hear something good of themselves, and ill of the enemy. At this time the task of news-writers is easy: they have nothing to do but to tell that a battle is expected, and afterwards that a battle has been fought, in which we and our friends, whether conquering or conquered, did all, and our enemies did nothing.

Scarcely any thing awakens attention like a tale of

cruelty. The writer of news never fails in the intermission of action to tell how the enemies murdered children and ravished virgins; and, if the scene of action be somewhat distant, scalps half the inhabitants of a province.

Among the calamities of war, may be justly numbered the diminution of the love of truth, by the falshoods which interest dictates, and credulity encourages. A peace will equally leave the warrior and relator of wars destitute of employment; and I know not whether more is to be dreaded from streets filled with soldiers accustomed to plunder, or from garrets filled with scribblers accustomed to lie.

N°. 31. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1758.

MANY moralists have remarked, that pride has of all human vices the widest dominion, appears in the greatest multiplicity of forms, and lies hid under the greatest variety of disguises; of disguises which, like the moon's *veil of brightness*, are both its *lustre and its shade*, and betray it to others, though they hide it from ourselves.

It is not my intention to degrade pride from this pre-eminence of mischief; yet I know not whether idleness may not maintain a very doubtful and obstinate competition.

There are some that profess idleness in its full dignity, who call themselves the *Idle*, as *Busiris* in the play *calls himself the Proud;* who boast that they *do nothing*, and thank their stars that they have *nothing to do;* who sleep every night till they can

sleep no longer, and rise only that exercise may enable them to sleep again; who prolong the reign of darkness by double curtains, and never see the sun but to *tell him how they hate his beams;* whose whole labour is to vary the posture of indulgence, and whose day differs from their night but as a couch or chair differs from a bed.

These are the true and open votaries of idleness for whom she weaves the garlands of poppies, and into whose cup she pours the waters of oblivion; who exist in a state of unruffled stupidity, forgetting and forgotten; who have long ceased to live, and at whose death the survivors can only say, that they have ceased to breathe.

But idleness predominates in many lives where it is not suspected; for, being a vice which terminates in itself, it may be enjoyed without injury to others; and it is therefore not watched like fraud, which endangers property; or like pride, which naturally seeks its gratifications in another's inferiority. Idleness is a silent and peaceful quality, that neither raises envy by ostentation, nor hatred by opposition; and therefore nobody is busy to censure or detect it.

As pride sometimes is hid under humility, idleness is often covered by turbulence and hurry. He that neglects his known duty and real employment, naturally endeavours to crowd his mind with something that may bar out the remembrance of his own folly, and does any thing but what he ought to do with eager diligence, that he may keep himself in his own favour.

Some are always in a state of preparation, occupied in previous measures, forming plans, accumu*lating materials*, and providing for the main affair. *These are* certainly under the secret power of idleness. *Nothing* is to be expected from the workman

whose tools are for ever to be sought. I was once told by a great master, that no man ever excelled in painting, who was eminently curious about pencils and colours.

There are others to whom idleness dictates another expedient, by which life may be passed unprofitably away without the tediousness of many vacant hours. The art is, to fill the day with petty business, to have always something in hand which may raise curiosity, but not solicitude, and keep the mind in a state of action, but not of labour.

This art has for many years been practised by my old friend *Sober* with wonderful success. *Sober* is a man of strong desires and quick imagination, so exactly balanced by the love of ease, that they can seldom stimulate him to any difficult undertaking: they have however, so much power that they will not suffer him to lie quite at rest; and though they do not make him sufficiently useful to others, they make him at least weary of himself.

Mr. *Sober*'s chief pleasure is conversation: there is no end of his talk or his attention; to speak or to hear is equally pleasing; for he still fancies that he is teaching or learning something, and is free for the time from his own reproaches.

But there is one time at night when he must go home, that his friends may sleep; and another time in the morning when all the world agrees to shut out interruption. These are the moments of which poor *Sober* trembles at the thought. But the misery of these irksome intervals he has many means of alleviating. He has persuaded himself that the manual arts are undeservedly overlooked; he has observed in many trades the effects of close thought, and just ratiocination. From speculation he proceeded to practice, and supplied himself with the tools of a carpenter, with which he mended his coal-

box very successfully, and which he still continues to employ, as he finds occasion.

He has attempted at other times the crafts of shoe-maker, tinman, plumber, and potter; in all these arts he has failed, and resolves to qualify himself for them by better information. But his daily amusement is chemistry. He has a small furnace, which he employs in distillation, and which has long been the solace of his life. He draws oils and waters, and essences and spirits, which he knows to be of no use; sits and counts the drops as they come from his retort, and forgets that, whilst a drop is falling, a moment flies away.

Poor *Sober!* I have often teized him with reproof, and he has often promised reformation; for no man is so much open to conviction as the *Idler*, but there is none on whom it operates so little. What will be the effect of this paper I know not; perhaps he will read it and laugh, and light the fire in his furnace; but my hope is, that he will quit his trifles, and betake himself to rational and useful diligence.

N°. 32. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1758.

Among the innumerable mortifications that waylay human arrogance on every side, may well be reckoned our ignorance of the most common objects and effects, a defect of which we become more sensible, by every attempt to supply it. Vulgar and inactive minds confound familiarity with *knowledge*, and conceive themselves informed of the *whole* nature of things when they are shown their

form or told their use; but the speculatist, who is not content with superficial views, harasses himself with fruitless curiosity, and still as he acquires more, perceives only that he knows less.

Sleep is a state in which a great part of every life is passed. No animal has yet been discovered, whose existence is not varied with intervals of insensibility; and some late philosophers have extended the empire of sleep over the vegetable world.

Yet of this change, so frequent, so great, so general, and so necessary, no searcher has yet found either the efficient or final cause; or can tell by what power the mind and body are thus chained down in irresistible stupefaction; or what benefits the animal receives from this alternate suspension of its active powers.

Whatever may be the multiplicity or contrariety of opinions upon this subject, Nature has taken sufficient care that theory shall have little influence on practice. The most diligent inquirer is not able long to keep his eyes open: the most eager disputant will begin about midnight to desert his argument; and, once in four-and-twenty hours, the gay and the gloomy, the witty and the dull, the clamorous and the silent, the busy and the idle, are all overpowered by the gentle tyrant, and all lie down in the equality of sleep.

Philosophy has often attempted to repress insolence, by asserting, that all conditions are levelled by death; a position which, however it may deject the happy, will seldom afford much comfort to the wretched. It is far more pleasing to consider, that sleep is equally a leveller with death; that the time is never at a great distance, when the balm of rest shall be diffused alike upon every head, when the

diversities of life shall stop their operation, and the high and low shall lie down together.

It is somewhere recorded of *Alexander*, that in the pride of conquests, and intoxication of flattery, he declared that he only perceived himself to be a man by the necessity of sleep. Whether he considered sleep as necessary to his mind or body, it was indeed a sufficient evidence of human infirmity; the body which required such frequency of renovation, gave but faint promises of immortality; and the mind which, from time to time, sunk gladly into insensibility, had made no very near approaches to the felicity of the supreme and self-sufficient nature.

I know not what can tend more to repress all the passions that disturb the peace of the world, than the consideration that there is no height of happiness or honour from which man does not eagerly descend to a state of unconscious repose; that the best condition of life is such, that we contentedly quit its good to be disentangled from its evils; that in a few hours splendor fades before the eye, and praise itself deadens in the ear; the senses withdraw from their objects, and reason favours the retreat.

What then are the hopes and prospects of covetousness, ambition, and rapacity? Let him that desires most have all his desires gratified, he never shall attain a state which he can for a day and a night contemplate with satisfaction, or from which, if he had the power of perpetual vigilance, he would not long for periodical separations.

All envy would be extinguished, if it were universally known that there are none to be envied, and surely none can be much envied who are not pleased with themselves. There is reason to suspect, that the distinctions of mankind have more show than *value*, when it is found that all agree to be weary *alike of* pleasures and of cares; that the powerful

and the weak, the celebrated and obscure, join in one common wish, and implore from Nature's hand the nectar of oblivion.

Such is our desire of abstraction from ourselves, that very few are satisfied with the quantity of stupefaction which the needs of the body force upon the mind. *Alexander* himself added intemperance to sleep, and solaced with the fumes of wine the sovereignty of the world; and almost every man has some art by which he steals his thoughts away from his present state.

It is not much of life that is spent in close attention to any important duty. Many hours of every day are suffered to fly away without any traces left upon the intellects. We suffer phantoms to rise up before us, and amuse ourselves with the dance of airy images, which, after a time, we dismiss for ever, and know not how we have been busied.

Many have no happier moments than those that they pass in solitude, abandoned to their own imagination, which sometimes puts sceptres in their hands or mitres on their heads, shifts the scene of pleasure with endless variety, bids all the forms of beauty sparkle before them, and gluts them with every change of visionary luxury.

It is easy in these semi-slumbers to collect all the possibilities of happiness, to alter the course of the sun, to bring back the past, and anticipate the future, to unite all the beauties of all seasons, and all the blessings of all climates, to receive and bestow felicity, and forget that misery is the lot of man. All this is a voluntary dream, a temporary recession from the realities of life to airy fictions; and habitual subjection of reason to fancy.

Others are afraid to be alone, and amuse themselves by a perpetual succession of companions: but the difference is not great; in solitude we have our

dreams to ourselves, and in company we agree to dream in concert. The end sought in both is forgetfulness of ourselves.

N°. 33. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1758.

[I hope the author of the following letter will excuse the omission of some parts, and allow me to remark, that the Journal of the Citizen in the *Spectator* has almost precluded the attempt of any future writer.]

——— *Non ita Romuli*
Præscriptum, & intonsi Catonis
Auspiciis, veterumque normâ.

HOR.

SIR,

You have often solicited correspondence. I have sent you the *Journal* of a *Senior Fellow*, or *Genuine Idler*, just transmitted from *Cambridge* by a facetious correspondent, and warranted to have been transcribed from the common-place book of the journalist.

Monday, Nine o'Clock. Turned off my bed-maker for waking me at eight. Weather rainy. Consulted my weather-glass. No hopes of a ride before dinner.

Ditto, Ten. After breakfast transcribed half a sermon from Dr. *Hickman*. *N. B.* Never to transcribe any more from *Calamy;* Mrs. *Pilcocks*, at my

curacy, having one volume of that author lying in her parlour-window.

Ditto, Eleven. Went down into my cellar. *Mem.* My *Mountain* will be fit to drink in a month's time. *N. B.* To remove the five-year-old port into the new bin on the left hand.

Ditto, Twelve. Mended a pen. Looked at my weather-glass again. Quicksilver very low. Shaved. Barber's hand shakes.

Ditto, One. Dined alone in my room on a soal. *N. B.* The shrimp-sauce not so good as Mr. *H.* of *Peterhouse* and I used to eat in *London* last winter, at the *Mitre* in *Fleet-street.* Sat down to a pint of *Madeira.* Mr. *H.* surprised me over it. We finished two bottles of port together, and were very cheerful. *Mem.* To dine with Mr. *H.* at *Peterhouse* next *Wednesday.* One of the dishes a leg of pork and pease, by my desire.

Ditto, Six. Newspaper in the common-room.

Ditto, Seven. Returned to my room. Made a tiff of warm punch, and to bed before nine; did not fall asleep till ten, a young fellow-commoner being very noisy over my head.

Tuesday, Nine. Rose squeamish. A fine morning. Weather-glass very high.

Ditto, Ten. Ordered my horse, and rode to the five-mile stone on the *Newmarket* road. Appetite gets better. A pack of hounds in full cry crossed the road, and startled my horse.

Ditto, Twelve. Dressed. Found a letter on my table to be in *London* the 19th inst. Bespoke a new wig.

Ditto, One. At dinner in the hall. Too much water in the soup. Dr. *Dry* always orders the beef to be salted too much for me.

Ditto, Two. In the common-room. Dr. Dry

gave us an instance of a gentleman who kept the gout out of his stomach by drinking old *Madeira*. Conversation chiefly on the expeditions. Company broke up at four. Dr. *Dry* and myself played at back-gammon for a brace of snipes. Won.

Ditto, Five. At the coffee-house. Met Mr. *H.* there. Could not get a sight of the *Monitor*.

Ditto, Seven. Returned home, and stirred my fire. Went to the common-room, and supped on the snipes with Dr. *Dry*.

Ditto, Eight. Began the evening in the common-room. Dr. *Dry* told several stories. Were very merry. Our new fellow, that studies physic, very talkative toward twelve. Pretends he will bring the youngest Miss ——— to drink tea with me soon. Impertinent blockhead!

Wednesday, Nine. Alarmed with a pain in my ancle. Q. The gout? Fear I can't dine at *Peterhouse*; but I hope a ride will set all to rights. Weather-glass below FAIR.

Ditto, Ten. Mounted my horse, though the weather suspicious. Pain in my ancle entirely gone. Catched in a shower coming back. Convinced that my weather-glass is the best in *Cambridge*.

Ditto, Twelve. Dressed. Sauntered up to the *Fishmonger's*-hill. Met Mr. *H.* and went with him to *Peterhouse*. Cook made us wait thirty-six minutes beyond the time. The company, some of my *Emanuel* friends. For dinner, a pair of soals, a leg of pork and pease among other things. *Mem.* Pease-pudding not boiled enough. Cook reprimanded and sconced in my presence.

Ditto, after dinner. Pain in my ancle returns. Dull all the afternoon. Rallied for being no company. Mr. *H's* account of the accommodations on *the road* in his *Bath* journey.

Ditto, Six. Got into spirits. Never was more

chatty. We sat late at whist. Mr. *H.* and self agreed at parting to take a gentle ride, and dine at the old house on the *London* road to-morrow.

Thursday, Nine. My sempstress. She has lost the measure of my wrist. Forced to be measured again. The baggage has got a trick of smiling.

Ditto, Ten to Eleven. Made some rappee-snuff. Read the magazines. Received a present of pickles from Miss *Pilcocks*. *Mem.* To send in return some collared eel, which I know both the old lady and miss are fond of.

Ditto, Eleven. Glass very high. Mounted at the gate with Mr. *H.* Horse skittish, and wants exercise. Arrive at the old house. All the provisions bespoke by some rakish fellow-commoner in the next room, who had been on a scheme to *Newmarket*. Could get nothing but mutton-chops off the worst end. Port very new. Agree to try some other house to-morrow.

HERE the Journal breaks off: for the next morning, as my friend informs me, our genial academic was waked with a severe fit of the gout; and, at present, enjoys all the dignity of that disease. But I believe we have lost nothing by this interruption: since a continuation of the remainder of the Journal, through the remainder of the week, would most probably have exhibited nothing more than a repeated relation of the same circumstances of *idling* and luxury.

I hope it will not be concluded, from this specimen of academic life, that I have attempted to decry our universities. If literature is not the essential requisite of the modern academic, I am yet persuaded that *Cambridge* and Oxford, however *degenerated*, surpass the fashionable academies of our *metropolis*, and the *gymnasia* of foreign countries.

The number of learned persons in these celebrated seats is still considerable, and more conveniences and opportunities for study still subsist in them, than in any other place. There is at least one very powerful incentive to learning; I mean the GENIUS *of the place*. It is a sort of inspiring deity, which every youth of quick sensibility and ingenuous disposition creates to himself, by reflecting, that he is placed under those venerable walls, where a HOOKER and a HAMMOND, a BACON and a NEWTON, once pursued the same course of science, and from whence they soared to the most elevated heights of literary fame. This is that incitement which *Tully*, according to his own testimony, experienced at *Athens*, when he contemplated the porticos where *Socrates* sat, and the laurel-groves where *Plato* disputed. But there are other circumstances, and of the highest importance, which render our colleges superior to all other places of education. Their institutions, although somewhat fallen from their primæval simplicity, are such as influence in a particular manner, the moral conduct of their youth; and in this general depravity of manners and laxity of principles, pure religion is no where more strongly inculcated. The *academies*, as they are presumptuously styled, are too low to be mentioned; and foreign seminaries are likely to prejudice the unwary mind with Calvinism. But *English* universities render their students virtuous, at least by excluding all opportunities of vice; and, by teaching them the principles of the *Church of England*, confirm them in those of true christianity.

N°. 34. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1758.

To illustrate one thing by its resemblance to another, has been always the most popular and efficacious art of instruction. There is indeed no other method of teaching that of which any one is ignorant, but by means of something already known; and a mind so enlarged by contemplation and inquiry, that it has always many objects within its view, will seldom be long without some near and familiar image through which an easy transition may be made to truths more distant and obscure.

Of the parallels which have been drawn by wit and curiosity, some are literal and real, as between poetry and painting, two arts which pursue the same end, by the operation of the same mental faculties, and which differ only as the one represents things by marks permanent and natural, the other by signs accidental and arbitrary. The one therefore is more easily and generally understood, since similitude of form is immediately perceived; the other is capable of conveying more ideas; for men have thought and spoken of many things which they do not see.

Other parallels are fortuitous and fanciful, yet these have sometimes been extended to many particulars of resemblance by a lucky concurrence of diligence and chance. The animal *body* is composed of many members, united under the direction of one mind; any number of individuals, connected for some common purpose, is therefore called a body. *From this* participation of the same appellation *arose the* comparison of the body natural and

body politic, of which, how far soever it has been deduced, no end has hitherto been found.

In these imaginary similitudes, the same word is used at once in its primitive and metaphorical sense. Thus health, ascribed to the body natural, is opposed to sickness; but attributed to the body politic stands as contrary to adversity. These parallels, therefore, have more of genius, but less of truth; they often please, but they never convince.

Of this kind is a curious speculation frequently indulged by a philosopher of my acquaintance, who had discovered, that the qualities requisite to conversation are very exactly represented by a bowl of punch.

Punch, says this profound investigator, is a liquor compounded of spirit and acid juices, sugar and water. The spirit, volatile and fiery, is the proper emblem of vivacity and wit; the acidity of the lemon will very aptly figure pungency of raillery, and acrimony of censure; sugar is the natural representative of luscious adulation and gentle complaisance; and water is the proper hieroglyphic of easy prattle, innocent and tasteless.

Spirit alone is too powerful for use. It will produce madness rather than merriment; and instead of quenching thirst will inflame the blood. Thus wit, too copiously poured out, agitates the hearer with emotions rather violent than pleasing; every one shrinks from the force of its oppression, the company sits intranced and overpowered; all are astonished, but nobody is pleased.

The acid juices give this genial liquor all its power of stimulating the palate. Conversation would become dull and vapid, if negligence were not sometimes roused, and sluggishness quickened, by due severity of reprehension. But acids unmixed will distort the face and torture the palate; and he that has no other qualities than penetration and asperity, he

whose constant employment is detection and censure, who looks only to find faults, and speaks only to punish them, will soon be dreaded, hated, and avoided.

The taste of sugar is generally pleasing, but it cannot long be eaten by itself. Thus meekness and courtesy will always recommend the first address, but soon pall and nauseate, unless they are associated with more sprightly qualities. The chief use of sugar is to temper the taste of other substances; and softness of behaviour in the same manner mitigates the roughness of contradiction, and allays the bitterness of unwelcome truth.

Water is the universal vehicle by which are conveyed the particles necessary to sustenance and growth, by which thirst is quenched, and all the wants of life and nature are supplied. Thus all the business of the world is transacted by artless and easy talk, neither sublimed by fancy, nor discoloured by affectation, without either the harshness of satire, or the lusciousness of flattery. By this limpid vein of language, curiosity is gratified, and all the knowledge is conveyed which one man is required to impart for the safety or convenience of another. Water is the only ingredient in punch which can be used alone, and with which man is content till fancy has framed an artificial want. Thus while we only desire to have our ignorance informed, we are most delighted with the plainest diction; and it is only in the moments of idleness or pride, that we call for the gratifications of wit or flattery.

He only will please long, who, by tempering the acidity of satire with the sugar of civility, and allaying the heat of wit with the frigidity of humble chat, can make the true punch of conversation; and as that punch can be drank in the greatest quantity which has the largest proportion of water, so that

companion will be oftenest welcome, whose talk flows out with inoffensive copiousness, and unenvied insipidity.

No. 35. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1758.

TO THE IDLER.

MR. IDLER,

If it be difficult to persuade the idle to be busy, it is likewise, as experience has taught me, not easy to convince the busy that it is better to be idle. When you shall despair of stimulating sluggishness to motion, I hope you will turn your thoughts towards the means of stilling the bustle of pernicious activity.

I am the unfortunate husband of a *buyer of bargains*. My wife has somewhere heard, that a good housewife *never* has any thing to *purchase when it is wanted*. This maxim is often in her mouth, and always in her head. She is not one of those philosophical talkers that speculate without practice, and learn sentences of wisdom only to repeat them; she is always making additions to her stores; she never looks into a broker's shop, but she spies something that may be wanted some time; and it is impossible to make her pass the door of a house where she hears *goods selling by auction*.

Whatever she thinks cheap, she holds it the duty of an œconomist to buy; in consequence of this

maxim, we are encumbered on every side with useless lumber. The servants can scarcely creep to their beds through the chests and boxes that surround them. The carpenter is employed once a week in building closets, fixing cupboards, and fastening shelves; and my house has the appearance of a ship stored for a voyage to the colonies.

I had often observed that advertisements set her on fire; and therefore, pretending to emulate her laudable frugality, I forbade the newspaper to be taken any longer; but my precaution is vain; I know not by what fatality, or by what confederacy, every catalogue of *genuine furniture* comes to her hand, every advertisement of a newspaper newly opened is in her pocket-book, and she knows before any of her neighbours when the stock of any man *leaving off trade* is to be *sold cheap for ready money*.

Such intelligence is to my dear-one the Syren's song. No engagement, no duty, no interest, can withhold her from a sale, from which she always returns congratulating herself upon her dexterity at a bargain; the porter lays down his burthen in the hall; she displays her new acquisitions, and spends the rest of the day in contriving where they shall be put.

As she cannot bear to have any thing incomplete, one purchase necessitates another; she has twenty feather-beds more than she can use, and a late sale has supplied her with a proportionble number of *Whitney* blankets, a large roll of linen for sheets, and five quilts for every bed, which she bought because the seller told her, that if she would clear his hands he would let her have a bargain.

Thus by hourly encroachments my habitation is made *narrower* and narrower; the dining-room is so

crowded with tables, that dinner scarcely can be served; the parlour is decorated with so many piles of china, that I dare not step within the door; at every turn of the stairs I have a clock, and half the windows of the upper floors are darkened, that shelves may be set before them.

This, however, might be borne, if she would gratify her own inclinations without opposing mine. But I who am idle am luxurious, and she condemns me to live upon salt provision. She knows the loss of buying in small quantities, we have therefore whole hogs and quarters of oxen. Part of our meat is tainted before it is eaten, and part is thrown away because it is spoiled, but she persists in her system, and will never buy any thing by single pennyworths.

The common vice of those who are still grasping at more, is to neglect that which they already possess; but from this failing my charmer is free. It is the great care of her life that the pieces of beef should be boiled in the order in which they are bought; that the second bag of pease should not be opened till the first are eaten; that every feather-bed shall be lain on in its turn; that the carpets should be taken out of the chests once a month and brushed; and the rolls of linen opened now and then before the fire. She is daily inquiring after the best traps for mice, and keeps the rooms always scented by fumigations to destroy the moths. She employs a workman from time to time, to adjust six clocks that never go, and clean five jacks that rust in the garret; and a woman in the next alley lives by scouring the brass and pewter, which are only laid up to tarnish again.

She is always imagining some distant time in which she shall use whatever she accumulates; she has four looking-glasses which she cannot hang up in her house, but which will be handsome in more

lofty rooms; and pays rent for the place of a vast copper in some warehouse, because when we live in the country we shall brew our own beer.

Of this life I have long been weary, but know not how to change it; all the married men whom I consult advise me to have patience; but some old bachelors are of opinion, that since she loves sales so well, she should have a sale of her own; and I have, I think, resolved to open her hoards, and advertise an auction.

I am, SIR,
Your very humble servant,
PETER PLENTY.

No. 36. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1758.

THE great differences that disturb the peace of mankind are not about ends, but means. We have all the same general desires, but how those desires shall be accomplished will for ever be disputed. The ultimate purpose of government is temporal, and thatof religion is eternal happiness. Hitherto we agree; but here we must part, to try, according to the endless varieties of passion and understanding combined with one another, every possible form of government, and every imaginable tenet of religion.

We are told by *Cumberland* that *rectitude*, applied to action orcontemplation, is merely metaphorical; and that as a *right* line describes the shortest passage

from point to point, so a *right* action effects a good design by the fewest means; and so likewise a *right* opinion is that which connects distant truths by the shortest train of intermediate propositions.

To find the nearest way from truth to truth, or from purpose to effect, not to use more instruments where fewer will be sufficient, not to move by wheels and levers what will give way to the naked hand, is the great proof of a healthful and vigorous mind, neither feeble with helpless ignorance, nor overburdened with unwieldy knowledge.

But there are men who seem to think nothing so much the characteristic of a genius, as to do common things in an uncommon manner; like *Hudibras*, to *tell the clock by algebra;* or like the lady in Dr. *Young*'s satires, *to drink tea by stratagem;* to quit the beaten track only because it is known, and take a new path, however crooked or rough, because the strait was found out before.

Every man speaks and writes with intent to be understood; and it can seldom happen but he that understands himself might convey his notions to another, if, content to be understood, he did not seek to be admired; but when once he begins to contrive how his sentiments may be received, not with most ease to his reader, but with most advantage to himself, he then transfers his consideration from words to sounds, from sentences to periods, and as he grows more elegant becomes less intelligible.

It is difficult to enumerate every species of authors whose labours counteract themselves; the man of exuberance and copiousness, who diffuses every thought through so many diversities of expression, that it is lost like water in a mist; the ponderous dictator of sentences, whose notions are delivered in *the lump*, and are, like uncoined bullion, of more *weight than* use; the liberal illustrator, who shows *by examples* and comparisons what was clearly see

when it was first proposed; and the stately son of demonstration, who proves with mathematical formality what no man has yet pretended to doubt.

There is a mode of style for which I know not that the masters of oratory have yet found a name; a style by which the most evident truths are so obscured, that they can no longer be perceived, and the most familiar propositions so disguised that they cannot be known. Every other kind of eloquence is the dress of sense; but this is the mask by which a true master of his art will so effectually conceal it, that a man will as easily mistake his own positions, if he meets them thus transformed, as he may pass in a masquerade his nearest acquaintance.

This style may be called the *terrific*, for its chief intention is to terrify and amaze; it may be termed the *repulsive*, for its natural effect is to drive away the reader; or it may be distinguished, in plain *English*, by the denomination of the *bugbear style*, for it has more terror than danger, and will appear less formidable as it is more nearly approached.

A mother tells her infant, that *two and two make four;* the child remembers the proposition, and is able to count four to all the purposes of life, till the course of his education brings him among philosophers, who fright him from his former knowledge, by telling him, that four is a certain aggregate of units; that all numbers being only the repetition of an unit, which, though not a number itself, is the parent, root, or original of all number, *four* is the denomination assigned to a certain number of such repetitions. The only danger is, lest, when he first hears these dreadful sounds, the pupil should run away; if he has but the courage to stay till the conclusion, he will find that, when speculation has done its worst, two and two still make four.

An illustrious example of this species of eloquence may be found in *Letters concerning Mind.* The author begins by declaring, that *the sorts of things are things that now are, have been, and shall be, and the things that strictly* ARE. In this position, except the last clause, in which he uses something of the scholastic language, there is nothing but what every man has heard and imagines himself to know. But who would not believe that some wonderful novelty is presented to his intellect, when he is afterwards told, in the true *bugbear* style, that *the* ares, *in the former sense, are things that lie between the* have-beens *and* shall-be's. *The* have-beens *are things that are past; the* shall-be's *are things that are to come; and the things that* ARE, in the latter sense, *are things that have not been, nor shall be, nor stand in the midst of such as are before them, or shall be after them. The things that have been, and shall be, have respect to present, past, and future. Those likewise that now* ARE *have moreover place; that, for instance, which is here, that which is to the east, that which is to the west.*

All this, my dear reader, is very strange; but though it be strange, it is not new; survey these wonderful sentences again, and they will be found to contain nothing more than very plain truths, which till this Auther arose had always been delivered in plain language.

N°. 37. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1758.

THOSE who are skilled in the extraction and preparation of metals, declare, that iron is every where to be found; and that not only its proper ore is copiously treasured in the caverns of the earth, but that its particles are dispersed throughout all other bodies.

If the extent of the human view could comprehend the whole frame of the universe, I believe it would be found invariably true, that Providence has given that in greatest plenty, which the condition of life makes of greatest use; and that nothing is penuriously imparted or placed far from the reach of man, of which a more liberal distribution, or more easy acquisition, would increase real and rational felicity.

Iron is common, and gold is rare. Iron contributes so much to supply the wants of nature, that its use constitutes much of the difference between savage and polished life, between the state of him that slumbers in *European* palaces, and him that shelters himself in the cavities of a rock from the chilness of the night, or the violence of the storm. Gold can never be hardened into saws or axes; it can neither furnish instruments of manufacture, utensils of agriculture, nor weapons of defence; its only quality is to shine, and the value of its lustre arises from its scarcity.

Throughout the whole circle, both of natural and moral life, necessaries are as iron, and superfluities as gold. What we really need we may readily

obtain; so readily, that far the greater part of mankind has, in the wantonness of abundance, confounded natural with artificial desires, and invented necessities for the sake of employment, because the mind is impatient of inaction, and life is sustained with so little labour, that the tediousness of idle time cannot otherwise be supported.

Thus plenty is the original cause of many of our needs; and even the poverty, which is so frequent and distressful in civilized nations, proceeds often from that change of manners which opulence has produced. Nature makes us poor only when we want necessaries; but custom gives the name of poverty to the want of superfluities.

When Socrates passed through shops of toys and ornaments, he cried out, *How many things are here which I do not need!* And the same exclamation may every man make who surveys the common accommodations of life.

Superfluity and difficulty begin together. To dress food for the stomach is easy, the art is to irritate the palate when the stomach is sufficed. A rude hand may build walls, form roofs, and lay floors, and provide all that warmth and security require; we only call the nicer artificers to carve the cornice, or to paint the cielings. Such dress as may enable the body to endure the different seasons, the most unenlightened nations have been able to procure; but the work of science begins in the ambition of distinction, in variations of fashion, and emulation of elegance. Corn grows with easy culture; the gardener's experiments are only employed to exalt the flavors of fruits, and brighten the colours of flowers.

Even of knowledge, those parts are most easy which are generally necessary. The intercourse of society is maintained without the elegances of language. Figures, criticisms, and refinements,

are the work of those whom idleness makes weary of themselves. The commerce of the world is carried on by easy methods of computations. Subtilty and study are required only when questions are invented merely to puzzle, and calculations are extended to show the skill of the calculator. The light of the sun is equally beneficial to him whose eyes tell him that it moves, and to him whose reason persuades him that it stands still; and plants grow with the same luxuriance, whether we suppose earth or water the parent of vegetation.

If we raise our thoughts to nobler inquiries, we shall still find facility concurring with usefulness. No man needs stay to be virtuous till the moralists have determined the essence of virtue; our duty is made apparent by its proximate consequences, though the general and ultimate reason should never be discovered. Religion may regulate the life of him to whom the *Scotists* and *Thomists* are alike unknown; and the assertors of fate and free-will, however different in their talk, agree to act in the same manner.

It is not my intention to depreciate the politer arts or abstruser studies. That curiosity which always succeeds ease and plenty, was undoubtedly given us as a proof of capacity which our present state is not able to fill, as a preparative for some better mode of existence, which shall furnish employment for the whole soul, and where pleasure shall be adequate to our powers of fruition. In the mean time, let us gratefully acknowledge that goodness which grants us ease at a cheap rate, which changes the seasons where the nature of heat and cold has not been yet examined, and gives the vicissitudes of day and night to those who never marked the tropics, or numbered the constellations.

housewife may show *Penelope* with her web; the votress of a single life may carry *Ursula* with her troop of virgins; the gamester may have Fortune with her wheel; and those women *that have no character at all* may display a field of white enamel, as imploring help to fill up the vacuity.

There is a set of ladies who have outlived most animal pleasures, and, having nothing rational to put in their place, solace with cards the loss of what time has taken away, and the want of what wisdom, having never been courted, has never given. For these, I know not how to provide a proper decoration. They cannot be numbered among the gamesters; for though they are always at play, they play for nothing, and never rise to the dignity of hazard or the reputation of skill. They neither love nor are loved, and cannot be supposed to contemplate any human image with delight. Yet, though they despair to please, they always wish to be fine, and therefore cannot be without a bracelet. To this sisterhood I can recommend nothing more likely to please them than the king of clubs, a personage very comely and majestic, who will never meet their eyes without reviving the thought of some past or future party, and who may be displayed in the act of dealing with grace and propriety.

But the bracelet which might be most easily introduced into general use is a small convex mirror, in which the lady may see herself whenever she shall lift her hand. This will be a perpetual source of delight. Other ornaments are of use only in public, but this will furnish gratifications to solitude. This will show a face that must always please; she who is followed by admirers will carry about her a perpetual justification of the public voice; and she *who passes* without notice may appeal from prejudice *to her own* eyes.

But I know not why the privilege of the bracelet should be confined to women; it was in former ages worn by heroes in battle; and as modern soldiers are always distinguished by splendour of dress, I should rejoice to see the bracelet added to the cockade.

In hope of this ornamental innovation, I have spent some thoughts upon military bracelets. There is no passion more heroic than love; and therefore I should be glad to see the sons of *England* marching in the field, every man with the picture of a woman of honour bound upon his hand. But since in the army, as every where else, there will always be men who love nobody but themselves, or whom no woman of honour will permit to love her, there is a necessity of some other distinctions and devices.

I have read of a prince who, having lost a town, ordered the name of it to be every morning shouted in his ear till it should be recovered. For the same purpose I think the prospect of *Minorca* might be properly worn on the hands of some of our generals: others might delight their countrymen, and dignify themselves, with a view of *Rochefort* as it appeared to them at sea: and those that shall return from the conquest of *America*, may exhibit the warehouse of *Frontenac*, with an inscription denoting, that it was taken in less than three years by less than twenty thousand men.

I am, Sir, &c.

Tom Toy.

supposes that one in thirty dies yearly, the race of man may be said to be renewed at the end of thirty years. Who would have believed till now, that of every *English* generation, an hundred and fifty thousand perish in our goals! that in every century, a nation eminent for science, studious of commerce, ambitious of empire, should willingly lose, in noisome dungeons, five hundred thousand of its inhabitants; a number greater than has ever been destroyed in the same time by the pestilence and sword!

A very late occurrence may show us the value of the number which we thus condemn to be useless; in the re-establishment of the trained bands, thirty thousand are considered as a force sufficient against all exigences. While, therefore, we detain twenty thousand in prison, we shut up in darkness and uselessness two-thirds of an army which ourselves judge equal to the defence of our country.

The monastic institutions have been often blamed, as tending to retard the increase of mankind. And perhaps retirement ought rarely to be permitted, except to those whose employment is consistent with abstraction, and who, though solitary, will not be idle; to those whom infirmity makes useless to the commonwealth, or to those who have paid their due proportion to society, and who, having lived for others, may be honourably dismissed to live for themselves. But whatever be the evil or the folly of these retreats, those have no right to censure them whose prisons contain greater numbers than the monasteries of other countries. It is, surely, less foolish and less criminal to permit inaction than compel it; to comply with doubtful opinions of happiness, than condemn to certain and apparent misery; to indulge the extravagances of erroneous piety, than to multiply and enforce temptations to wickedness.

The misery of gaols is not half their evil: they

are filled with every corruption which poverty and wickedness can generate between them; with all the shameless and profligate enormities that can be produced by the impudence of ignominy, the rage of want, and the malignity of despair. In a prison, the awe of the public eye is lost, and the power of the law is spent; there are few fears, there are no blushes. The lewd inflame the lewd, the audacious harden the audacious. Every one fortifies himself as he can against his own sensibility, endeavours to practise on others the arts which are practised on himself; and gains the kindness of his associates by similitude of manners.

Thus some sink amidst their misery, and others survive only to propagate villany. It may be hoped, that our lawgivers will at length take away from us this power of starving and depraving one another; but, if there be any reason why this inveterate evil should not be removed in our age, which true policy has enlightened beyond any former time, let those, whose writings form the opinions and the practices of their contemporaries, endeavour to transfer the reproach of such imprisonment from the debtor to the creditor, till universal infamy shall pursue the wretch whose wantonness of power, or revenge of disappointment, condemns another to torture and to ruin; till he shall be hunted through the world as an enemy to man, and find in riches no shelter from contempt.

Surely, he whose debtor has perished in prison, although he may acquit himself of deliberate murder, must at least have his mind clouded with discontent, when he considers how much another has suffered from him; when he thinks on the wife bewailing her husband, or the children begging the bread which their father would have earned. If there are any

made so obdurate by avarice or cruelty, as to revolve these consequences without dread or pity, I must leave them to be awakened by some other power, for I write only to human beings.

N°. 39. SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

As none look more diligently about them than those who have nothing to do, or who do nothing, I suppose it has not escaped your observation, that the bracelet, an ornament of great antiquity, has been for some years revived among the *English* ladies.

The genius of our nation is said, I know not for what reason, to appear rather in improvement than invention. The bracelet was known in the earliest ages; but it was formerly only a hoop of gold, or a cluster of jewels, and showed nothing but the wealth or vanity of the wearer; till our ladies, by carrying pictures on their wrists, made their ornaments works of fancy and exercises of judgment.

This addition of art to luxury is one of the innumerable proofs that might be given of the late increase of female erudition; and I have often congratulated myself that my life has happened at a time when those, on whom so much of human felicity depends, have learned to think as well as speak, and when

respect takes possession of the ear, while love is entering at the eye.

I have observed, that, even by the suffrages of their own sex, those ladies are accounted wisest, who do not yet disdain to be taught; and therefore, I shall offer a few hints for the completion of the bracelet, without any dread of the fate of *Orpheus*.

To the ladies who wear the pictures of their husbands or children, or any other relations, I can offer nothing more decent or more proper. It is reasonable to believe that she intends at least to perform her duty, who carries a perpetual excitement to recollection and caution, whose own ornaments must upbraid her with every failure, and who, by an open violation of her engagements, must for ever forfeit her bracelet.

Yet I know not whether it is the interest of the husband to solicit very earnestly a place on the bracelet. If his image be not in the heart, it is of small avail to hang it on the hand. A husband encircled with diamonds and rubies may gain some esteem, but will never excite love. He that thinks himself most secure of his wife, should be fearful of persecuting her continually with his presence. The joy of life is variety; the tenderest love requires to be rekindled by intervals of absence; and Fidelity herself will be wearied with transferring her eye only from the same man to the same picture.

In many countries the condition of every woman is known by her dress. Marriage is rewarded with some honourable distinction, which celibacy is forbidden to usurp. Some such information a bracelet might afford. The ladies might enrol themselves in distinct classes, and carry in open view the emblems of their order. The bracelet of the authoress may exhibit the Muses in a grove of laurel; the

housewife may show *Penelope* with her web; the votress of a single life may carry *Ursula* with her troop of virgins; the gamester may have Fortune with her wheel; and those women *that have no character at all* may display a field of white enamel, as imploring help to fill up the vacuity.

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I am, Sir, &c.

Tom Toy.

N°. 40. SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 1759.

THE practice of appending to the narratives of public transactions more minute and domestic intelligence, and filling the newspapers with advertisements, has grown up by slow degrees to its present state.

Genius is shown only by invention. The man who first took advantage of the general curiosity that was excited by a siege or battle, to betray the readers of news into the knowledge of the shop where the best puffs and powder were to be sold, was undoubtedly a man of great sagacity, and profound skill in the nature of man. But when he had once shown the way, it was easy to follow him; and every man now knows a ready method of informing the public of all that he desires to buy or sell, whether his wares be material or intellectual; whether he makes clothes, or teaches the mathematics; whether he be a tutor that wants a pupil, or a pupil that wants a tutor.

Whatever is common is despised. Advertisements are now so numerous that they are very negligently perused, and it is therefore become necessary to gain attention by magnificence of promises, and by eloquence sometimes sublime and sometimes pathetic.

Promise, large promise, is the soul of an advertisement. I remember a *wash-ball* that had a quality truly wonderful—it gave *an exquisite edge to the razor*. And there are now to be sold, *for ready money only*, some *duvets for bed-coverings, of down, beyond comparison, superior to what is call'd otter-down*, and in-

deed such, that its *many excellences cannot be here set forth.* With one excellence we are made acquainted—*it is warmer than four or five blankets, and lighter than one.*

There are some, however, that know the prejudice of mankind in favour of modest sincerity. The vender of the *beautifying fluid* sells a lotion that repels pimples, washes away freckles, smooths the skin, and plumps the flesh; and yet, with a generous abhorrence of ostentation, confesses, that it will not *restore the bloom of fifteen to a lady of fifty.*

The true pathos of advertisements must have sunk deep into the heart of every man that remembers the zeal shown by the seller of the *anodyne necklace,* for the ease and safety *of poor toothing infants,* and the affection with which he warned every mother, that *she would never forgive herself* if her infant should perish without a necklace.

I cannot but remark to the celebrated author who gave, in his notifications of the camel and dromedary, so many specimens of the genuine sublime, that there is now arrived another subject yet more worthy of his pen. *A famous Mohawk Indian warrior, who took* Dieskaw *the French general prisoner, dressed in the same manner with the native Indians when they go to war, with his face and body painted, with his scalping-knife, tom-ax, and all other implements of war! a sight worthy the curiosity of every true Briton!* This is a very powerful description; but a critic of great refinement would say, that it conveys rather *horror* and *terror.* An Indian, dressed as he goes to war, may bring company together; but if he carries the scalping-knife and tom-ax, there are many true Britons that will never be persuaded to see him but through a grate.

It has been remarked by the severer judges, that the salutary sorrow of tragic scenes is too soon ef-

faced by the merriment of the epilogue; the same inconvenience arises from the improper disposition of advertisements. The noblest objects may be so associated as to be made ridiculous. The camel and dromedary themselves might have lost much of their dignity between *the true flour of mustard* and the *original Daffy's elixir;* and I could not but feel some indignation when I found this illustrious *Indian* warrior immediately succeeded by *a fresh parcel of Dublin butter.*

The trade of advertising is now so near to perfection, that it is not easy to propose any improvement. But as every art ought to be exercised in due subordination to the public good, I cannot but propose it as a moral question to these masters of the public ear, Whether they do not sometimes play too wantonly with our passions, as when the registrar of lottery tickets invites us to his shop by an account of the prizes which he sold last year; and whether the advertising controvertists do not indulge asperity of language without any adequate provocation; as in the dispute about *straps for razors*, now happily subsided, and in the altercation which at present subsists concerning *eau de luce?*

In an advertisement it is allowed to every man to speak well of himself, but I know not why he should assume the privilege of censuring his neighbour. He may proclaim his own virtue or skill, but ought not to exclude others from the same pretensions.

Every man that advertises his own excellence should write with some consciousness of a character which dares to call the attention of the public. He should remember that his name is to stand in the same paper with those of the king of *Prussia* and the emperor of *Germany*, and endeavour to make himself worthy of such association.

Some regard is likewise to be paid to posterity.

There are men of diligence and curiosity who treasure up the papers of the day merely because others neglect them, and in time they will be scarce. When these collections shall be read in another century, how will numberless contradictions be reconciled; and how shall fame be possibly distributed among the taylors and boddice-makers of the present age?

Surely these things deserve consideration. It is enough for me to have hinted my desire that these abuses may be rectified; but such is the state of nature, that what all have the right of doing, many will attempt without sufficient care or due qualifications.

N°. 41. SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 1759.

THE following letter relates to an affliction perhaps not necessary to be imparted to the public; but I could not persuade myself to suppress it, because I think I know the sentiments to be sincere, and I feel no disposition to provide for this day any other entertainment.

At tu quisquis eris, miseri qui cruda poetæ
Credideris fletu funera digna tuo,
Hæc postrema tibi sit flendi causa, fluatque
Lenis inoffenso vitaque morsque gradu.

MR. IDLER,

NOTWITHSTANDING the warnings of philosophers, and the daily examples of losses and misfortunes which life forces upon our observation, such is the

absorption of our thoughts in the business of the present day, such the resignation of our reason to empty hopes of future felicity, or such our unwillingness to foresee what we dread, that every calamity comes suddenly upon us, and not only presses us as a burthen, but crushes as a blow.

There are evils which happen out of the common course of nature, against which it is no reproach not to be provided. A flash of lightning intercepts the traveller in his way. The concussion of an earthquake heaps the ruins of cities upon their inhabitants. But other miseries time brings, though silently, yet visibly, forward by its even lapse, which yet approach us unseen because we turn our eyes away, and seize us unresisted, because we could not arm ourselves against them but by setting them before us.

That it is vain to shrink from what cannot be avoided, and to hide that from ourselves which must some time be found, is a truth which we all know, but which all neglect, and perhaps none more than the speculative reasoner, whose thoughts are always from home, whose eye wanders over life, whose fancy dances after meteors of happiness kindled by itself, and who examines every thing rather than his own state.

Nothing is more evident than that the decays of age must terminate in death; yet there is no man, says *Tully*, who does not believe that he may yet live another year; and there is none who does not, upon the same principle, hope another year for his parent or his friend: but the fallacy will be in time detected; the last year, the last day, must come. It has come, and is past. The life which made my own life pleasant is at an end, and the gates of death are shut upon my prospects.

The loss of a friend upon whom the heart was fixed, to whom every wish and endeavour tended, is

a state of dreary desolation, in which the mind looks abroad impatient of itself, and finds nothing but emptiness and horror. The blameless life, the artless tenderness, the pious simplicity, the modest resignation, the patient sickness, and the quiet death, are remembered only to add value to the loss, to aggravate regret for what cannot be amended, to deepen sorrow for what cannot be recalled.

These are the calamities by which Providence gradually disengages us from the love of life. Other evils fortitude may repel, or hope may mitigate; but irreparable privation leaves nothing to exercise resolution or flatter expectation. The dead cannot return, and nothing is left us here but languishment and grief.

Yet such is the course of nature, that whoever lives long must outlive those whom he loves and honours. Such is the condition of our present existence, that life must one time lose its associations, and every inhabitant of the earth must walk downward to the grave alone and unregarded, without any partner of his joy or grief, without any interested witness of his misfortunes or success.

Misfortune, indeed, he may yet feel; for where is the bottom of the misery of man? But what is success to him that has none to enjoy it? Happiness is not found in self-contemplation; it is perceived only when it is reflected from another.

We know little of the state of departed souls, because such knowledge is not necessary to a good life. Reason deserts us at the brink of the grave, and can give no farther intelligence. Revelation is not wholly silent. *There is joy in the angels of Heaven over one sinner that repenteth;* and surely this joy is not incommunicable to souls disentangled from the body, and made like angels.

Let hope therefore dictate, what revelation does not confute, that the union of souls may still remain; and

that we who are struggling with sin, sorrow, and infirmities, may have our part in the attention and kindness of those who have finished their course, and are now receiving their reward.

These are the great occasions which force the mind to take refuge in religion: when we have no help in ourselves, what can remain but that we look up to a higher and a greater Power? and to what hope may we not raise our eyes and hearts, when we consider that the greatest POWER is the BEST?

Surely there is no man who, thus afflicted, does not seek succour in the *gospel*, which has brought *life and immortality to light*. The precepts of *Epicurus*, who teaches us to endure what the laws of the universe make necessary, may silence, but not content us. The dictates of *Zeno*, who commands us to look with indifference on external things, may dispose us to conceal our sorrow, but cannot assuage it. Real alleviation of the loss of friends, and rational tranquillity in the prospect of our own dissolution, can be received only from the promises of Him in whose hands are life and death, and from the assurance of another and better state, in which all tears will be wiped from the eyes, and the whole soul shall be filled with joy. Philosophy may infuse stubbornness, but Religion only can give patience.

I am, &c.

No. 42. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1759.

THE subject of the following letter is not wholly unmentioned by the RAMBLER. The SPECTATOR has also a letter containing a case not much different. I hope my correspondent's performance is more an effort of genius, than effusion of the passions; and that she hath rather attempted to paint some possible distress, than really feels the evils which she has described.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

THERE is a cause of misery, which, though certainly known both to you and your predecessors, has been little taken notice of in your papers; I mean the snares that the bad behaviour of parents extends over the paths of life which their children are to tread after them; and as I make no doubt but the *Idler* holds the shield for virtue as well as the glass for folly, that he will employ his leisure hours as much to his own satisfaction, in warning his readers against a danger, as in laughing them out of a fashion: for this reason I am tempted to ask admittance for my story in your paper, though it has nothing to recommend it but truth, and the honest wish of warning others to shun the track which I am afraid may lead me at last to ruin.

I am the child of a father, who, having always lived in one spot in the country where he was born, and having had no genteel education himself, thought no qualifications in the world desirable but as they led up to fortune, and no learning necessary to happiness but such as might most effectually teach me to make the best market of myself: I was unfortunately born a beauty, to a full sense of which my father took care to flatter me; and having, when very young, put me to a school in the country, afterwards transplanted me to another in town, at the instigation of his friends, where his ill-judged fondness let me remain no longer than to learn just enough experience to convince me of the sordidness of his views, to give me an idea of perfections which my present situation will never suffer me to reach, and to teach me sufficient morals to dare to despise what is bad, though it be in a father.

Thus equipped (as he thought completely) for life, I was carried back into the country, and lived with him and my mother in a small village, within a few miles of the county-town; where I mixed, at first with reluctance, among company which, though I never despised, I could not approve, as they were brought up with other inclinations, and narrower views than my own. My father took great pains to show me every where, both at his own house, and at such public diversions as the country afforded: he frequently told the people all he had was for his daughter; took care to repeat the civilities I had received from all his friends in *London;* told how much I was admired, and all his little ambition could suggest to set me in a stronger light.

Thus have I continued tricked out for sale, as I may call it, and doomed, by parental authority, to a state little better than that of prostitution. I look *on myself* as growing cheaper every hour, and am

losing all that honest pride, that modest confidence, in which the virgin dignity consists. Nor does my misfortune stop here: though many would be too generous to impute the follies of a father to a child whose heart has set her above them; yet I am afraid the most charitable of them will hardly think it possible for me to be a daily spectatress of his vices without tacitly allowing them, and at last consenting to them, as the eye of the frighted infant is, by degrees, reconciled to the darkness of which at first it was afraid. It is a common opinion, he himself must very well know, that vices like diseases, are often hereditary; and that the property of the one is to infect the manners, as the other poisons the springs of life.

Yet this, though bad, is not the worst; my father deceives himself the hopes of the very child he has brought into the world; he suffers his house to be the seat of drunkenness, riot, and irreligion; who seduces, almost in my sight, the menial servant, converses with the prostitute, and corrupts the wife! Thus I, who from my earliest dawn of reason was taught to think that at my approach every eye sparkled with pleasure, or was dejected as conscious of superior charms, am excluded from society, through fear lest I should partake, if not of my father's crimes, at least of his reproach. Is a parent, who is so little solicitous for the welfare of a child, better than a pirate who turns a wretch adrift in a boat at sea, without a star to steer by, or an anchor to hold it fast? Am I not to lay all my miseries at those doors which ought to have opened only for my protection? And if doomed to add at last one more to the number of those wretches whom neither the world nor its law befriends, may I not justly say that I have been awed by a parent

into ruin? But though a parent's power is screened from insult and violation by the very words of Heaven, yet surely no laws divine or human, forbid me to remove myself from the malignant shade of a plant that poisons all around it, blasts the bloom of youth, checks its improvements, and makes all its flowrets fade; but to whom can the wretched, can the dependent fly? For me to fly a father's house, is to be a beggar: I have only one comfort amidst my anxieties, a pious relation, who bids me appeal to Heaven for a witness to my just intentions, fly as a deserted wretch to its protection; and, being asked who my father is, point, like the antient philosopher, with my finger to the heavens.

The hope in which I write this, is, that you will give it a place in your paper; and, as your essays sometimes find their way into the country, that my father may read my story there; and, if not for his own sake yet for mine, spare to perpetuate that worst of calamities to me, the loss of character, from which all his dissimulation has not been able to rescue himself. Tell the world, Sir, that it is possible for virtue to keep its throne unshaken without any other guard than itself; that it is possible to maintain that purity of thought so necessary to the completion of human excellence even in the midst of temptations; when they have no friend within, nor are assisted by the voluntary indulgence of vicious thoughts.

If the insertion of a story like this does not break in on the plan of your paper, you have it in your power to be a better friend than her father to

PERDITA.

N°. 43. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1759.

THE natural advantages which arise from the position of the earth which we inhabit, with respect to the other planets, afford much employment to mathematical speculation, by which it has been discovered, that no other conformation of the system could have given such commodious distributions of light and heat, or imparted fertility and pleasure to so great a part of a revolving sphere.

It may be, perhaps, observed by the moralist, with equal reason, that our globe seems particularly fitted for the residence of a being, placed here only for a short time, whose task is to advance himself to a higher and happier state of existence, by unremitted vigilance of caution, and activity of virtue.

The duties required of man are such as human nature does not willingly perform, and such as those are inclined to delay who yet intend some time to fulfil them. It was therefore necessary that this universal reluctance should be counteracted, and the drowsiness of hesitation wakened into resolve; that the danger of procrastination should be always in view, and the fallacies of security be hourly detected.

To this end all the appearances of nature uniformly conspire. Whatever we see on every side reminds us of the lapse of time and the flux of life. The day and night succeed each other, the rotation of seasons diversifies the year, the sun rises, attains the meridian, declines, and sets; and the moon every night changes its form.

The day has been considered as an image of the year, and the year as the representation of life. The morning answers to the spring, and the spring to childhood and youth; the noon corresponds to the summer, and the summer to the strength of manhood. The evening is an emblem of autumn, and autumn of declining life. The night with its silence and darkness shows the winter, in which all the powers of vegetation are benumbed; and the winter points out the time when life shall cease, with its hopes and pleasures.

He that is carried forward, however swiftly, by a motion equable and easy, perceives not the change of place but by the variation of objects. If the wheel of life, which rolls thus silently along, passed on through undistinguishable uniformity, we should never mark its approaches to the end of the course. If one hour were like another; if the passage of the sun did not show that the day is wasting; if the change of seasons did not impress upon us the flight of the year; quantities of duration equal to days and years would glide unobserved. If the parts of time were not variously coloured, we should never discern their departure or succession, but should live thoughtless of the past, and careless of the future, without will, and perhaps without power, to compute the periods of life, or to compare the time which is already lost with that which may probably remain.

But the course of time is so visibly marked, that it is observed even by the birds of passage, and by nations who have raised their minds very little above animal instinct: there are human beings whose language does not supply them with words by which they can number five, but I have read of none that have not names for day and night, for *summer* and winter.

Yet it is certain that these admonitions of nature, however forcible, however importunate, are too often vain; and that many who mark with such accuracy the course of time, appear to have little sensibility of the decline of life. Every man has something to do which he neglects; every man has faults to conquer which he delays to combat.

So little do we accustom ourselves to consider the effects of time, that things necessary and certain often surprise us like unexpected contingences. We leave the beauty in her bloom, and, after an absence of twenty years, wonder, at our return, to find her faded. We meet those whom we left children, and can scarcely persuade ourselves to treat them as men. The traveller visits in age those countries through which he rambled in his youth, and hopes for merriment at the old place. The man of business, wearied with unsatisfactory prosperity, retires to the town of his nativity, and expects to play away the last years with the companions of his childhood, and recover youth in the fields where he once was young.

From this inattention, so general and so mischievous, let it be every man's study to exempt himself. Let him that desires to see others happy, make haste to give while his gift can be enjoyed, and remember that every moment of delay takes away something from the value of his benefaction. And let him, who purposes his own happiness, reflect, that while he forms his purpose the day rolls on, and *the night cometh, when no man can work!*

N°. 44. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1759.

MEMORY is, among the faculties of the human mind, that of which we make the most frequent use, or rather that of which the agency is incessant or perpetual. Memory is the primary and fundamental power, without which there could be no other intellectual operation. Judgment and ratiocination suppose something already known, and draw their decisions only from experience. Imagination selects ideas from the treasures of remembrance, and produces novelty only by varied combinations. We do not even form conjectures of distant, or anticipations of future events, but by concluding what is possible from what is past.

The two offices of memory are collection and distribution; by one images are accumulated, and by the other produced for use. Collection is always the employment of our first years; and distribution commonly that of our advanced age.

To collect and reposit the various forms of things, is far the most pleasing part of mental occupation. We are naturally delighted with novelty, and there is a time when all that we see is new. When first we enter into the world, whithersoever we turn our eyes, they meet Knowledge with Pleasure at her side; every diversity of nature pours ideas in upon the soul; neither search nor labour are necessary; we have nothing more to do than to open our eyes, and curiosity is gratified.

Much of the pleasure which the first survey of *the world* affords, is exhausted before we are con-

scious of our own felicity, or able to compare our condition with some other possible state. We have therefore few traces of the joy of our earliest discoveries; yet we all remember a time when nature had so many untasted gratifications, that every excursion gave delight which can now be found no longer, when the noise of a torrent, the rustle of a wood, the song of birds, or the play of lambs, had power to fill the attention, and suspend all perception of the course of time.

But these easy pleasures are soon at an end; we have seen in a very little time so much, that we call out for new objects of observation, and endeavour to find variety in books and life. But study is laborious, and not always satisfactory; and conversation has its pains as well as pleasures; we are willing to learn, but not willing to be taught; we are pained by ignorance, but pained yet more by another's knowledge.

From the vexation of pupillage men commonly set themselves free about the middle of life, by shutting up the avenues of intelligence, and resolving to rest in their present state; and they, whose ardour of inquiry continues longer, find themselves insensibly forsaken by their instructors. As every man advances in life, the proportion between those that are younger and that are older than himself is continually changing; and he that has lived half a century finds few that do not require from him that information which he once expected from those that went before him.

Then it is that the magazines of memory are opened, and the stores of accumulated knowledge are displayed by vanity or benevolence, or in honest commerce of mutual interest. Every man wants others, and is therefore glad when he is wanted by them. And as few men will endure the labour of

intense meditation without necessity, he that has learned enough for his profit or his honour, seldom endeavours after further acquisitions.

The pleasure of recollecting speculative notions would not be much less than that of gaining them, if they could be kept pure and unmingled with the passages of life; but such is the necessary concatenation of our thoughts, that good and evil are linked together, and no pleasure recurs but associated with pain. Every revived idea reminds us of a time when something was enjoyed that is now lost, when some hope was yet not blasted, when some purpose had yet not languished into sluggishness or indifference.

Whether it be that life has more vexations than comforts, or, what is in the event just the same, that evil makes deeper impression than good, it is certain that no man can review the time past without heaviness of heart. He remembers many calamities incurred by folly, many opportunities lost by negligence. The shades of the dead rise up before him; and he laments the companions of his youth, the partners of his amusements, the assistants of his labours, whom the hand of death has snatched away.

When an offer was made to *Themistocles* of teaching him the art of memory, he answered, that he would rather wish for the art of forgetfulness. He felt his imagination haunted by phantoms of misery which he was unable to suppress, and would gladly have calmed his thoughts with some *oblivious antidote*. In this we all resemble one another: the hero and the sage are, like vulgar mortals, overburthened by the weight of life; all shrink from recollection, and all wish for an art of forgetfulness.

No. 45. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1759.

THERE is in many minds a kind of vanity exerted to the disadvantage of themselves; a desire to be praised for superior acuteness discovered only in the degradation of their species, or censure of their country.

Defamation is sufficiently copious. The general lampooner of mankind may find long exercise for his zeal or wit, in the defects of nature, the vexations of life, the follies of opinion, and the corruptions of practice. But fiction is easier than discernment; and most of these writers spare themselves the labour of inquiry, and exhaust their virulence upon imaginary crimes, which, as they never existed, can never be mended.

That the painters find no encouragement among the *English* for many other works than portraits, has been imputed to national selfishness. 'Tis vain, says the satirist, to set before any *Englishman* the scenes of landscapes, or the heroes of history; nature and antiquity are nothing in his eye; he has no value but for himself, nor desires any copy but of his own form.

Whoever is delighted with his own picture must derive his pleasure from the pleasure of another. Every man is always present to himself, and has, therefore, little need of his own resemblance, nor can desire it, but for the sake of those whom he loves, and by whom he hopes to be remembered. This use of the art is a natural and reasonable consequence of affection; and though, like other

human actions, it is often complicated with pride, yet even such pride is more laudable than that by which palaces are covered with pictures, that, however excellent, neither imply the owner's virtue nor excite it.

Genius is chiefly exerted in historical pictures; and the art of the painter of portraits is often lost in the obscurity of his subject. But it is in painting as in life, what is greatest is not always best. I should grieve to see *Reynolds* transfer to heroes and to goddesses, to empty splendour and to airy fiction, that art which is now employed in diffusing friendship, in reviving tenderness, in quickening the affections of the absent, and continuing the presence of the dead.

Yet in a nation great and opulent there is room, and ought to be patronage, for an art like that of painting through all its diversities; and it is to be wished, that the reward now offered for an historical picture may excite an honest emulation, and give beginning to an *English* school.

It is not very easy to find an action or event that can be efficaciously represented by a painter.

He must have an action not successive but instantaneous; for the time of a picture is a single moment. For this reason the death of *Hercules* cannot well be painted, though at the first view it flatters the imagination with very glittering ideas: the gloomy mountain overhanging the sea, and covered with trees, some bending to the wind, and some torn from the root by the raging hero; the violence with which he rends from his shoulders the invenomed garment; the propriety with which his muscular nakedness may be displayed: the death of *Lycas* whirled from the promontory; the gigantic presence of *Philoctetes;* the blaze of the fatal pile, which the deities behold with grief and terror from the sky.

All these images fill the mind, but will not compose a picture, because they cannot be united in a single moment. *Hercules* must have rent his flesh at one time, and tossed *Lycas* into the air at another; he must first tear up the trees, and then lie down upon the pile.

The action must be circumstantial and distinct. There is a passage in the Iliad which cannot be read without strong emotions. A *Trojan* prince, seized by *Achilles* in the battle, falls at his feet, and in moving terms supplicates for life, *How can a wretch like thee*, says the haughty *Greek*, *intreat to live, when thou knowest that the time must come when Achilles is to die?* This cannot be painted, because no peculiarity of attitude or disposition can so supply the place of language as to impress the sentiment.

The event painted must be such as excites passion, and different passions in the several actors, or a tumult of contending passions in the chief.

Perhaps the discovery of *Ulysses* by his nurse is of this kind. The surprise of the nurse mingled with joy; that of *Ulysses* checked by prudence, and clouded by solicitude; and the distinctness of the action by which the scar is found; all concur to complete the subject. But the picture, having only two figures, will want variety.

A much nobler assemblage may be furnished by the death of *Epaminondas*. The mixture of gladness and grief in the face of the messenger who brings his dying general an accouut of the victory; the various passions of the attendants; the sublimity of composure in the hero, while the dart is by his own command drawn from his side, and the faint gleam of satisfaction that diffuses itself over the languor of death, are worthy of that pencil which yet I do not wish to see employed upon them.

If the design were not too multifarious and extensive, I should wish that our painters would attempt the dissolution of the parliament by *Cromwell*. The point of time may be chosen when *Cromwell* looking round the Pandæmonium with contempt, ordered the bauble to be taken away; and *Harrison* laid hands on the Speaker to drag him from the chair.

The various appearances which rage and terror, and astonishment and guilt, might exhibit in the faces of that hateful assembly, of whom the principal persons may be faithfully drawn from portraits or prints; the irresolute repugnance of some, the hypocritical submissions of others, the ferocious insolence of *Cromwell*, the rugged brutality of *Harrison*, and the general trepidation of fear and wickedness would, if some proper disposition could be contrived, make a picture of unexampled variety, and irresistible instruction.

N°. 46. SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 1759.

MR. IDLER,

I AM encouraged, by the notice you have taken of *Betty Broom*, to represent the miseries which I suffer from a species of tyranny which, I believe, is not very uncommon, though perhaps it may have escaped the observation of those who converse little with fine ladies, or see them only in their public characters.

To this method of venting my vexation I am the more inclined, because if I do not complain to you, I must burst in silence; for my mistress has teazed me and teazed me till I can hold no longer, and yet I must not tell her of her tricks. The girls that live in common services can quarrel, and give warning, and find other places; but we that live with great ladies, if we once offend them, have nothing left but to return into the country.

I am waiting-maid to a lady who keeps the best company, and is seen at every place of fashionable resort. I am envied by all the maids in the square, for few countesses leave off so many clothes as my mistress, and nobody shares with me: so that I supply two families in the country with finery for the assizes and horse-races, besides what I wear myself. The steward and house-keeper have joined against me to procure my removal, that they may advance a relation of their own; but their designs are found out by my lady, who says I need not fear them, for she will never have dowdies about her.

You would think, Mr. *Idler*, like others, that I am very happy, and may well be contented with my lot. But I will tell you. My lady has an odd humour. She never orders any thing in direct words, for she loves a sharp girl that can take a hint.

I would not have you suspect that she has any thing to hint which she is ashamed to speak at length; for none can have greater purity of sentiment, or rectitude of attention. She has nothing to hide, yet nothing will she tell. She always gives her directions oblique and allusively, by the mention of something relative or consequential, without any other purpose than to exercise my acuteness and her own.

It is impossible to give a notion of this style

otherwise than by examples. One night, when she had sat writing letters till it was time to be dressed, *Molly*, said she, *the Ladies are all to be at Court to-night in white aprons.* When she means that I should send to order the chair, she says, *I think the streets are clean, I may venture to walk.* When she would have something put into its place, she bids me *lay it on the floor.* If she would have me snuff the candles, she asks *whether I think her eyes are like a cat's?* If she thinks her chocolate delayed, she talks of *the benefit of abstinence.* If any needle-work is forgotten, she supposes *that I have heard of the lady who died by pricking her finger.*

She always imagines that I can recal every thing past from a single word. If she wants her head from the milliner, she only says, *Molly, you know Mrs. Tape.* If she would have the mantua-maker sent for, she remarks *that Mr. Taffaty, the mercer, was here last week.* She ordered, a fortnight ago, that the first time she was abroad all day I should choose her a new set of coffee-cups at the china-shop: of this she reminded me yesterday, as she was going down stairs, by saying, *You can't find your way now to Pall-Mall.*

All this would not vex me, if, by increasing my trouble, she spared her own; but, dear Mr. *Idler*, is it not as easy to say *coffee-cups*, as *Pall-Mall?* and to tell me in plain words what I am to do, and when it is to be done, as to torment her own head with the labour of finding hints, and mine with that of understanding them?

When first I came to this lady, I had nothing like the learning that I have now; for she has many books, and I have much time to read; so that of late I have seldom missed her meaning: but when she first took me I was an ignorant girl; and she, who, as is very common, confounded want of know-

ledge with want of understanding, began once to despair of bring me to any thing, because, when I came into her chamber at the call of her bell, she asked me, *Whether we lived in Zembla;* and I did not guess the meaning of her inquiry, but modestly answered that *I could not tell.* She had happened to ring once when I did not hear her, and meant to put me in mind of that country where sounds are said to be congealed by the frost.

Another time, as I was dressing her head, she began to talk on a sudden of *Medusa*, and *snakes*, and *men turned into stone, and maids that, if they were not watched, would let their mistresses be Gorgons.* I looked round me half frightened, and quite bewildered; till at last, finding that her literature was thrown away upon me, she bid me, with great vehemence, reach the curling-irons.

It is not without some indignation, Mr. *Idler*, that I discover, in these artifices of vexation, something worse than foppery or caprice; a mean delight in superiority, which knows itself in no danger of reproof or opposition; a cruel pleasure in seeing the perplexity of a mind obliged to find what is studiously concealed, and a mean indulgence of petty malevolence, in the sharp censure of involuntary, and very often of inevitable failings. When, beyond her expectation, I hit upon her meaning, I can perceive a sudden cloud of disappointment spread over her face; and have sometimes been afraid lest I should lose her favour by understanding her when she means to puzzle me.

This day, however, she has conquered my sagacity. When she went out of her dressing-room she said nothing but, *Molly you know*, and hastened to her chariot. What I am to know is yet a secret; but if I do not know before she comes back, what

I have yet no means of discovering, she will make my dullness a pretence for a fortnight's ill humour, treat me as a creature devoid of the faculties necessary to the common duties of life, and perhaps give the next gown to the housekeeper.

I am, SIR,

Your humble Servant,

MOLLY QUICK.

N°. 47. SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 1759.

TO THE IDLER.

MR. IDLER,

I AM the unfortunate wife of a city wit, and cannot but think that my case may deserve equal compassion with any of those which have been represented in your paper.

I married my husband within three months after the expiration of his apprenticeship; we put our money together, and furnished a large and splendid shop, in which he was for five years and a half diligent and civil. The notice which curiosity or kindness commonly bestows on beginners, was continued by confidence and esteem; one customer, pleased with his treatment and his bargain, recommended another; and we were busy behind the counter from *morning* to night.

Thus every day increased our wealth and our reputation. My husband was often invited to dinner openly on the *Exchange* by hundred-thousand-pounds men; and whenever I went to any of the halls, the wives of the aldermen made me low courtesies. We always took up our notes before the day, and made all considerable payments by drafts upon our banker.

You will easily believe that I was well enough pleased with my condition; for what happiness can be greater than that of growing every day richer and richer? I will not deny that, imagining myself likely to be in a short time the sheriff's lady, I broke off my acquaintance with some of my neighbours; and advised my husband to keep good company, and not to be seen with men that were worth nothing.

In time we found that ale disagreed with his constitution, and went every night to drink his pint at a tavern, where he met with a set of critics, who disputed upon the merits of the different theatrical performers. By these idle fellows he was taken to the play, which at first he did not seem much to heed; for he owned, that he very seldom knew what they were doing, and that, while his companions would let him alone, he was commonly thinking on his last bargain.

Having once gone, however, he went again and again, though I often told him that three shillings were thrown away; at last he grew uneasy if he missed a night, and importuned me to go with him. I went to a tragedy which they called *Macbeth;* and, when I came home, told him, that I could not bear to see men and women make themselves such fools, by pretending to be witches and ghosts, generals and kings, and to walk in their sleep when they were as much awake as those that looked at them. He told

me, that I must get higher notions, and that a play was the most rational of all entertainments, and most proper to relax the mind after the business of the day.

By degrees he gained knowledge of some of the players; and when the play was over, very frequently treated them with suppers; for which he was admitted to stand behind the scenes.

He soon began to lose some of his morning hours in the same folly, and was for one winter very diligent in his attendance on the rehearsals; but of this species of idleness he grew weary, and said, that the play was nothing without the company.

His ardour for the diversion of the evening increased; he bought a sword, and paid five shillings a night to sit in the boxes; he went sometimes into a place which he calls the green-room, where all the wits of the age assemble; and, when he had been there, could do nothing for two or three days but repeat their jests, or tell their disputes.

He has now lost his regard for every thing but the play-house; he invites, three times a week, one or other to drink claret, and talk of the drama. His first care in the morning is to read the play-bills; and, if he remembers any lines of the tragedy which is to be represented, walks about the shop, repeating them so loud, and with such strange gestures, that the passengers gather round the door.

His greatest pleasure when I married him was to hear the situation of his shop commended, and to be told how many estates have been got in it by the same trade; but of late he grows peevish at any mention of business, and delights in nothing so much as to be told that he speaks like *Mossop*.

Among his new associates he has learned another language, and speaks in such a strain that his neighbours cannot understand him. If a customer talks

longer than he is willing to hear, he will complain that he has been excruciated with unmeaning verbosity; he laughs at the letters of his friends for their tameness of expression, and often declares himself weary of attending to the *minutiæ* of a shop.

It is well for me that I know how to keep a book, for of late he is scarcely ever in the way. Since one of his friends told him that he had a genius for tragic poetry, he has locked himself in an upper room six or seven hours a day; and, when I carry him any paper to be read or signed, I hear him talking vehemently to himself, sometimes of love and beauty, sometimes of friendship and virtue, but more frequently of liberty and his country.

I would gladly, Mr. *Idler*, be informed what to think of a shopkeeper, who is incessantly talking about liberty; a word, which, since his acquaintance with polite life, my husband has always in his mouth; he is, on all occasions, afraid of our liberty, and declares his resolution to hazard all for liberty. What can the man mean? I am sure he has liberty enough—it were better for him and me if his liberty was lessened.

He has a friend, whom he calls a critic, that comes twice a week to read what he is writing. This critic tells him that his piece is a little irregular, but that some detached scenes will shine prodigiously, and that in the character of *Bombulus* he is wonderfully great. My scribbler then squeezes his hand, calls him the best of friends, thanks him for his sincerity, and tells him that he hates to be flattered. I have reason to believe that he seldom parts with his dear friend without lending him two guineas, and am afraid that he gave bail for him three days ago.

By this course of life our credit as traders is lessened; and I cannot forbear to suspect, that my hus-

band's honour as a wit is not much advanced, for he seems to be always the lowest of the company, and is afraid to tell his opinion till the rest have spoken. When he was behind his counter, he used to be brisk, active, and jocular, like a man that knew what he was doing, and did not fear to look another in the face; but among wits and critics he is timorous and awkward, and hangs down his head at his own table. Dear Mr. *Idler*, persuade him, if you can, to return once more to his native element. Tell him, that his wit will never make him rich, but that there are places where riches will always make a wit.

I am, SIR, &c.

DEBORAH GINGER.

No. 48. SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 1759.

THERE is no kind of idleness, by which we are so easily seduced, as that which dignifies itself by the appearance of business, and by making the loiterer imagine that he has something to do which must not be neglected, keeps him in perpetual agitation, and hurries him rapidly from place to place.

He that sits still, or reposes himself upon a couch, no more deceives himself than he deceives others; he knows that he is doing nothing, and has no other solace of his insignificance than the resolution, which the lazy hourly make, of changing his mode of life.

To do nothing every man is ashamed; and to do *much almost* every man is unwilling or afraid. In-

numerable expedients have therefore been invented to produce motion without labour, and employment without solicitude. The greater part of those whom the kindness of fortune has left to their own direction, and whom want does not keep chained to the counter or the plough, play throughout life with the shadows of business, and know not at last what they have been doing.

These imitators of action are of all denominations. Some are seen at every auction without intention to purchase; others appear punctually at the *Exchange*, though they are known there only by their faces. Some are always making parties to visit collections for which they have no taste; and some neglect every pleasure and every duty to hear questions, in which they have no interest, debated in parliament.

These men never appear more ridiculous than in the distress which they imagine themselves to feel, from some accidental interruption of those empty pursuits. A tiger newly imprisoned is indeed more formidable, but not more angry, than *Jack Tulip* withheld from a florist's feast, or *Tom Distich* hindered from seeing the first representation of a play.

As political affairs are the highest and most extensive of temporal concerns; the mimic of a politician is more busy and important than any other trifler. Monsieur *le Noir*, a man who, without property or importance in any corner of the earth, has, in the present confusion of the world, declared himself a steady adherent to the *French*, is made miserable by a wind that keeps back the packet-boat, and still more miserable by every account of a *Malouin* privateer caught in his cruize; he knows well that nothing can be done or said by him which can produce any effect but that of laughter, that he can *neither hasten* nor retard good or evil, that his

joys and sorrows have scarcely any partakers; yet such is his zeal, and such his curiosity, that he would run barefooted to *Gravesend*, for the sake of knowing first that the *English* had lost a tender, and would ride out to meet every mail from the continent if he might be permitted to open it.

Learning is generally confessed to be desirable, and there are some who fancy themselves always busy in acquiring it. Of these ambulatory students, one of the most busy is my friend *Tom Restless*.

Tom has long had a mind to be a man of knowledge, but he does not care to spend much time among authors; for he is of opinion that few books deserve the labour of perusal, that they give the mind an unfashionable cast, and destroy that freedom of thought and easiness of manners indispensably requisite to acceptance in the world. *Tom* has therefore found another way to wisdom. When he rises he goes into a coffee-house, where he creeps so near to men whom he takes to be reasoners as to hear their discourse, and endeavours to remember something which, when it has been strained through *Tom's* head, is so near to nothing, that what it once was cannot be discovered. This he carries round from friend to friend through a circle of visits, till, hearing what each says upon the question, he becomes able at dinner to say a little himself; and, as every great genius relaxes himself among his inferiors, meets with some who wonder how so young a man can talk so wisely.

At night he has a new feast prepared for his intellects; he always runs to a disputing society, or a speaking club, where he half hears what, if he had heard the whole, he would but half understand; goes home pleased with the consciousness of a day well spent, lies down full of ideas, and rises in the *morning* empty as before.

No. 49. SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1759.

I SUPPED three nights ago with my friend *Will Marvel*. His affairs obliged him lately to take a journey into *Devonshire*, from which he has just returned. He knows me to be a very patient hearer, and was glad of my company, as it gave him an opportunity of disburthening himself by a minute relation of the casualties of his expedition.

Will is not one of those who go out and return with nothing to tell. He has a story of his travels, which will strike a home-bred citizen with horror, and has in ten days suffered so often the extremes of terror and joy, that he is in doubt whether he shall ever again expose either his body or mind to such danger and fatigue.

When he left *London* the morning was bright, and a fair day was promised. But *Will* is born to struggle with difficulties. That happened to him, which has sometimes, perhaps, happened to others. Before he had gone more than ten miles, it began to rain. What course was to be taken? His soul disdained to turn back. He did what the king of *Prussia* might have done; he flapped his hat, buttoned up his cape, and went forwards, fortifying his mind by the stoical consolation, that whatever is violent will be short.

His constancy was not long tried; at the distance of about half a mile he saw an inn, which he entered wet and weary, and found civil treatment and proper refreshment. After a respiteof about two hours, he

looked abroad, and seeing the sky clear, called for his horse, and passed the first stage without any other memorable accident.

Will considered, that labour must be relieved by pleasure, and that the strength which great undertakings require must be maintained by copious nutriment; he therefore ordered himself an elegant supper, drank two bottles of claret, and passed the beginning of the night in sound sleep; but, waking before light, was forewarned of the troubles of the next day, by a shower beating against his windows with such violence as to threaten the dissolution of nature. When he arose, he found what he expected, that the country was under water. He joined himself, however, to a company that was travelling the same way, and came safely to the place of dinner, though every step of his horse dashed the mud into the air.

In the afternoon, having parted from his company, he set forward alone, and passed many collections of water, of which it was impossible to guess the depth, and which he now cannot review without some censure of his own rashness; but what a man undertakes he must perform, and *Marvel* hates a coward at his heart.

Few that lie warm in their beds think what others undergo, who have perhaps been as tenderly educated, and have as acute sensations as themselves. My friend was now to lodge the second night almost fifty miles from home, in a house which he never had seen before, among people to whom he was totally a stranger, not knowing whether the next man he should meet would prove good or bad; but seeing an inn of a good appearance, he rode resolutely into the yard; and knowing that respect is often paid in proportion as it is claimed, delivered his injunctions

to the hostler with spirit, and entering the house, called vigorously about him.

On the third day up rose the sun and Mr. *Marvel*. His troubles and his dangers were now such as he wishes no other man ever to encounter. The ways were less frequented, and the country more thinly inhabited. He rode many a lonely hour through mire and water, and met not a single soul for two miles together with whom he could exchange a word. He cannot deny that, looking round upon the dreary region, and seeing nothing but bleak fields and naked trees, hills obscured by fogs, and flats covered with inundations, he did for some time suffer melancholy to prevail upon him, and wished himself again safe at home. One comfort he had, which was to consider that none of his friends were in the same distress, for whom, if they had been with him, he should have suffered more than for himself; he could not forbear sometimes to consider how happy the *Idler* is settled in an easier condition, who, surrounded like him with terrors, could have done nothing but lie down and die.

Amidst these reflections he came to a town, and found a dinner which disposed him to more cheerful sentiments: but the joys of life are short, and its miseries are long; he mounted and travelled fifteen miles more through dirt and desolation.

At last the sun set, and all the horrors of darkness came upon him. He then repented the weak indulgence in which he had gratified himself at noon with too long an interval of rest: yet he went forward along a path which he could no longer see, sometimes rushing suddenly into water, and sometimes incumbered with stiff clay, ignorant whither he was going, and uncertain whether his next step might not be the last.

In this dismal gloom of nocturnal peregrination his horse unexpectedly stood still. *Marvel* had heard many relations of the instinct of horses, and was in doubt what danger might be at hand. Sometimes he fancied that he was on the bank of a river still and deep, and sometimes that a dead body lay across the track. He sat still a while to recollect his thoughts; and as he was about to alight and explore the darkness, out stepped a man with a lantern, and opened the turnpike. He hired a guide to the town, arrived in safety, and slept in quiet.

The rest of his journey was nothing but danger. He climbed and descended precipices on which vulgar mortals tremble to look; he passed marshes like the *Serbonian bog, where armies whole have sunk;* he forded rivers where the current roared like the *Egre* or the *Severn;* or ventured himself on bridges that trembled under him, from which he looked down on foaming whirlpools, or dreadful abysses; he wandered over houseless heaths, amidst all the rage of the elements, with the snow driving in his face, and the tempest howling in his ears.

Such are the colours in which *Marvel* paints his adventures. He has accustomed himself to souning words and hyperbolical images, till he has lost the power of true description. In a road through which the heaviest carriages pass without difficulty, and the post-boy every day and night goes and returns, he meets with hardships like those which are endured in *Siberian* deserts, and misses nothing of romantic danger but a giant and a dragon. When his dreadful story is told in proper terms, it is only that the way was dirty in winter, and that he experienced the common vicissitudes of rain and sunshine.

N°. 50. SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 1759.

THE character of Mr. *Marvel* has raised the merriment of some and the contempt of others, who do not sufficiently consider how often they hear and practise the same arts of exaggerated narration.

There is not, perhaps, among the multitudes of all conditions that swarm upon the earth, a single man who does not believe that he has something extraordinary to relate of himself; and who does not, at one time or other, summon the attention of his friends to the casualties of his adventures, and the vicissitudes of his fortune; casualties and vicissitudes that happen alike in lives uniform and diversified; to the commander of armies, and the writer at a desk; to the sailor who resigns himself to the wind and water, and the farmer whose longest journey is to the market.

In the present state of the world men may pass through *Shakspeare*'s seven stages of life, and meet nothing singular and wonderful. But such is every man's attention to himself, that what is common and unheeded when it is only seen, becomes remarkable and peculiar when we happen to feel it.

It is well enough known to be according to the usual process of nature that men should sicken and recover, that some designs should succeed and others miscarry, that friends should be separated and meet again, that some should be made angry by endeavours to please them, and some be pleased when no care has been used to gain their approbation, that

men and women should at first come together by chance, like each other so well as to commence acquaintance, improve acquaintance into fondness, increase or extinguish fondness by marriage, and have children of different degrees of intellects and virtue, some of whom die before their parents, and others survive them.

Yet let any man tell his own story, and nothing of all this has ever befallen him according to the common order of things; something has always discriminated his case; some unusual concurrence of events has appeared which made him more happy or more miserable than other mortals; for in pleasures or calamities, however common, every one has comforts and afflictions of his own.

It is certain that without some artificial augmentations, many of the pleasures of life, and almost all its embellishments, would fall to the ground. If no man was to express more delight than he felt, those who felt most would raise little envy. If travellers were to describe the most laboured performances of art with the same coldness as they survey them, all expectations of happiness from change of place would cease. The pictures of *Raphael* would hang without spectators, and the gardens of *Versailles* might be inhabited by hermits. All the pleasure that is received ends in an opportunity of splendid falsehood, in the power of gaining notice by the display of beauties which the eye was weary of beholding, and a history of happy moments, of which, in reality, the most happy was the last.

The ambition of superior sensibility and superior eloquence disposes the lovers of arts to receive rapture at one time, and communicate it at another; and each labours first to impose upon himself, and then to propagate the imposture.

Pain is less subject than pleasure to caprices of

expression. The torments of disease, and the grief for irremediable misfortunes, sometimes are such as no words can declare, and can only be signified by groans, or sobs, or inarticulate ejaculations. Man has from nature a mode of utterance peculiar to pain, but he has none peculiar to pleasure, because he never has pleasure but in such degrees as the ordinary use of language may equal or surpass.

It is nevertheless certain, that many pains as well as pleasures are heightened by rhetorical affectation, and that the picture is, for the most part, bigger than the life.

When we describe our sensations of another's sorrows either in friendly or ceremonious condolence, the customs of the world scarcely admit of rigid veracity. Perhaps the fondest friendship would enrage oftener than comfort, were the tongue on such occasions faithfully to represent the sentiments of the heart; and I think the strictest moralists allow forms of address to be used without much regard to their literal acceptation, when either respect or tenderness requires them, because they are universally known to denote not the degree but the species of our sentiments.

But the same indulgence cannot be allowed to him who aggravates dangers incurred or sorrow endured by himself, because he darkens the prospect of futurity, and multiplies the pains of our condition by useless terror. Those who magnify their delights are less criminal deceivers, yet they raise hopes which are sure to be disappointed. It would be undoubtedly best, if we could see and hear every thing as it is, that nothing might be too anxiously dreaded, or too ardently pursued.

N°. 51. SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 1759.

It has been commonly remarked, that eminent men are least eminent at home, that bright characters lose much of their splendour at a nearer view, and many who fill the world with their fame, excite very little reverence among those that surround them in their domestic privacies.

To blame or to suspect is easy and natural. When the fact is evident, and the cause doubtful, some accusation is always engendered between idleness and malignity. This disparity of general and familiar esteem is therefore imputed to hidden vices, and to practices indulged in secret, but carefully covered from the public eye.

Vice will indeed always produce contempt. The dignity of *Alexander*, though nations fell prostrate before him, was certainly held in little veneration by the partakers of his midnight revels, who had seen him, in the madness of wine, murder his friend, or set fire to the *Persian* palace at the instigation of a harlot; and it is well remembered among us, that the avarice of *Marlborough* kept him in subjection to his wife, while he was dreaded by *France* as her conqueror, and honoured by the emperor as his deliverer.

But though, where there is vice there must be want of reverence, it is not reciprocally true, that when there is want of reverence there is always *vice*. That awe which great actions or abilities *impress* will be inevitably diminished by acquaint-

ance, though nothing either mean or criminal should be found.

Of men, as of every thing else, we must judge according to our knowledge. When we see of a hero only his battles, or of a writer only his books, we have nothing to allay our ideas of their greatness. We consider the one only as the guardian of his country, and the other only as the instructor of mankind. We have neither opportunity nor motive to examine the minuter parts of their lives, or the less apparent peculiarities of their characters; we name them with habitual respect, and forget, what we still continue to know, that they are men like other mortals.

But such is the constitution of the world, that much of life must be spent in the same manner by the wise and the ignorant, the exalted and the low. Men, however distinguished by external accidents or intrinsic qualities, have all the same wants, the same pains, and, as far as the senses are consulted, the same pleasures. The petty cares and petty duties are the same in every station to every understanding, and every hour brings some occasion on which we all sink to the common level. We are all naked till we are dressed, and hungry till we are fed; and the general's triumph, and sage's disputation, end, like the humble labours of the smith or plowman, in a dinner or in sleep.

Those notions which are to be collected by reason, in opposition to the senses, will seldom stand forward in the mind, but lie treasured in the remoter repositories of memory, to be found only when they are sought. Whatever any man may have written or done, his precepts or his valour will scarcely overbalance the unimportant uniformity which runs through his time. We do not easily con-

sider him as great, whom our own eyes show us to be little; nor labour to keep present to our thoughts the latent excellences of him who shares with us all our weaknesses and many of our follies; who like us is delighted with slight amusements, busied with trifling employments, and disturbed by little vexations.

Great powers cannot be exerted, but when great exigences make them necessary. Great exigences can happen but seldom, and therefore those qualities which have a claim to the veneration of mankind, lie hid, for the most part, like subterranean treasures, over which the foot passes as on common ground, till necessity breaks open the golden cavern.

In the ancient celebration of victory, a slave was placed on the triumphal car, by the side of the general, who reminded him by a short sentence, that he was a man. Whatever danger there might be lest a leader, in his passage to the capitol, should forget the frailties of his nature, there was surely no need of such an admonition; the intoxication could not have continued long; he would have been at home but a few hours before some of his dependants would have forgot his greatness, and shown him, that notwithstanding his laurels, he was yet a man.

There are some who try to escape this domestic degradation, by labouring to appear always wise or always great; but he that strives against nature, will for ever strive in vain. To be grave of mien and slow of utterance; to look with solicitude and speak with hesitation, is attainable at will; but the show of wisdom is ridiculous when there is nothing to cause doubt, as that of valour where there is nothing to be feared.

A man who has duly considered the condition of his being, will contentedly yield to the course of things; he will not pant for distinction where distinction would imply no merit; but though on great occasions he may wish to be greater than others, he will be satisfied in common occurrences not to be less.

END OF VOL. THIRTY-THREE.

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